

# ISLAM, THE WEST, AND TOLERANCE



Conceiving Coexistence

AARON TYLER



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by Aaron Tyler

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For Lori, Benjamin, and Luke

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# Introduction

The only ethical choice is to seek to understand.

—Khaled Abou El Fadl

Samuel P. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* (1997), acclaimed by many policymakers and foreign affairs analysts in the West for its reasoned realism but also castigated by intellectuals for its infidelity to multiculturalism and challenge to the exportation of liberalism, attracted international attention for its assertion, following the dismantling of Cold War rivalries, that Islam would emerge as the most potent and violent challenge to Western civilization.<sup>1</sup> In a 1999 keynote address delivered at Colorado College, Huntington stated: "For the foreseeable future, the relations between the West and Islam will be at best distant and acrimonious and at worst conflictual and violent."<sup>2</sup> Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, many again harkened to Huntington's prescient predictions. The September 2001 al-Qaeda attacks, described by most world leaders as senseless and cowardly acts of violence, inaugurated what has become a global war on terrorism. While careful to emphasize that Islam is a peaceful religion and that the vast majority of Muslims are peaceable and law-abiding, Western leaders and citizens are cognizant of how the recent rise in terrorism is a product of Muslim extremism.

For many in the West, Islam has become the scapegoat of terrorism.<sup>3</sup> Deemed the impetus behind recent terrorist attacks on Western soil, Islam—more pointedly, its perversion by militant extremists—has become the chief fear of many Westerners. With the new "enemy" identified, attempts to excise Islam's radical elements, whether through banal discrimination upon Muslim immigrants in the *dar al-kufr* ("jurisdictions of the non-Muslims" or "abode of disbelief") or military, economic, and diplomatic pressure against the *dar al-Islam* ("jurisdictions of Muslims" or "abode of peace"), are now underway.<sup>4</sup>

One must remember that the Islamic world consists of much more than the Middle East. Muslims comprise a majority in over a quarter of the world's States, from the African Continent to Central Asia. South Asian

countries such as Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, as well as South East Asian countries such as Indonesia, host a significant majority of the world's Muslims and remain some of the most volatile regions of geopolitical concern to the West. Indeed, the over 1.3 billion Muslims scattered across the globe are diverse and not easily encapsulated. Islamic civilization covers a wide range of political and economic systems, as well as a vast array of ethnic groups, cultures, local traditions, languages, beliefs, and family and social values. Theological and ritualistic differences abound, making a universal *umma* an elusive reality.

What is more, civilizational idiosyncrasies are being constantly redefined, as distant cultures are experiencing more immediate expressions through "deterritorialization," the accelerating connectivity of economies and societies, and the proliferation of east to west migration. Learning to coexist with the Muslim Other is now as much a domestic question in the West as it is a global one. Perhaps for the moment, Huntington is correct: Islamic civilization, in all of its complexity, represents a decisive challenge to traditional Western civilization.

Of course, cultural insecurity is a concrete reality, not only within the Western world but within the Muslim world as well. Many Muslims in the Middle East have grown weary of the longstanding and violent Israel-Palestine conflict and the West's ideological and financial support of the Jewish state. Palestinian refugee camps, which remain tragically neglected by the global community, exacerbating decades of rancor, have provided arable soil in which to cultivate radicalized recruits for Muslim extremists. The American-led war on terrorism and its protracted and floundering liberation and occupation of Iraq have precipitated an unsettling anxiety for many Muslims in the region. The growing refugee crises in the Middle East are feeding resentment toward what is viewed as misguided, imperialistic "Western" intervention in Iraq and foreign policy double-standards regarding the Palestinian-Israeli question. Western consumerism and materialism are perceived by many in the world of Islam as a relentless threat to the survival of the religiocultural values and traditions espoused by the greater Islamic community. The West's postmodern relativism is regarded by many Muslims as intolerant to those traditional Muslim communities that adhere to a system of absolutes. To many in the Islamic world, Western democracy's excessive individualism is viewed as antithetical to their traditional emphasis upon communal values and group solidarity.

The lives of many Muslims are plagued by social and economic underdevelopment and exploitation. These depressed and often degrading circumstances, coupled with the perception of historical and modern exploitation by the West, help to explain the entrenched animosity many

Muslims hold against Western societies and their values. Muslim puritans and extremists have exploited and profited from this inimical relationship, manipulating Islamic symbols and tradition in order to legitimate religiopolitical goals. These militant castes of Muslims have spawned a violent terrorism that has only nettled the current civilizational dissonance. Of course, attempts at rapprochement with Western civilization are underway. Through scriptural exegesis, historical and juridical analysis, and theological and philosophical reinterpretation—utilizing such invaluable strategies as *qiyas* (analogy), *ijma* (consensus), and *ijtihad* (independent reasoning)—Muslim reformers are contesting the authenticity of Islam’s militant extremists, challenging their exclusivist, ahistorical ideologies and interpretations.

Muslim reformers are encouraging awareness and appreciation of Islam’s fourteen centuries of jurisprudence and tradition, emphasizing how its depth and complexity preclude perfunctory interpretations. In an effort to inoculate Islam against the violent tendencies of its militant adherents, Muslim reformers are striving to resuscitate a nonviolent and enlightened Muslim culture that is receptive to new ideas and cognizant of Islam’s principled but adaptive history. Indeed, a struggle for the marrow of Islam is underway as moderate Muslims are striving to rival the volcanic voices of radical adherents, disputing their infidelity to scripture and morally bankrupt ideologies.

### A Cultural-Comparative Study of Coexistence

The occasion is ripe for elevating the discourse between Western and Islamic political philosophy and ethics; indeed, the search for ideological common ground has never been more important. A growing scrutiny within certain academic disciplines (religious ethics, sociology, geography, and anthropology, in particular) of complex “non-academic” global happenings, especially after September 11, 2001, is indicative of this compelling “need to imagine and cultivate new cross-cultural and even inter-civilizational bonds and arrangements.”<sup>5</sup> A cultural-comparative model, which emphasizes comparative political philosophy and interreligious dialogue, is an ideal approach for exploring intercivilizational conflict and deciphering these cross-cultural bonds—not for apologetical purposes, but for the higher ends of reciprocal awareness and mutual edification and respect. Comparative theorizing helps to underscore, for the purpose of greater understanding, the idiosyncrasies of one culture through its juxtaposition with other cultures, but that does not mean that “relativism or radical incommensurability” is advocated.<sup>6</sup> Instead, as pointed out by political theorists Anthony Parel and Fred Dallmayr, not

only does comparative philosophy locate cultural differences, but it also probes affinities—or what Eric Voegelin termed “equivalences”—between cultural frameworks. It is this harnessing of equivalences that makes comparative theorizing essential in the contemporary search for intercivilizational commonality. Careful observation of both differences and “equivalences” between civilizations can broaden and enrich global academic discourse, helping to “deepen one’s understanding of one’s own tradition and engender understanding and respect for the traditions of others.”<sup>7</sup> There are, of course, a host of necessary qualifications and limitations of such an approach to understanding intercommunal conflict; a tendency to neglect intracultural complexities through artificial stereotyping of civilizations is, perhaps, the most significant deficiency associated with cultural-comparative theorizing. Thus, chapter one of this project, in part, will address the limitations, as well as advantages of using a cultural-comparative model for understanding the current conflicts occurring between (and even within) Western and Islamic civilizations.

To state whether the current multilevel conflict is symbolic of an enduring collision between Western and Muslim civilizations or, instead, is simply a short-lived alternative to the unrelenting processes of globalization and global multiculturalism, would be mere conjecture.<sup>8</sup> Whatever its future, this cultural confrontation requires critical assessment. In spite of the universal tendencies of both Western and Islamic civilizations, history and current experience teach that the most plausible, realistic, and mutually desirable solution to this escalating cross-cultural conflict is coexistence. Thus, a central purpose of this work is to address the need and possibilities for coexistence between Islamic and Western civilizations.

Coexistence has been defined in a variety of ways. In the *Cambridge Dictionary of American English*, to coexist simply means “to live or exist together, esp. peacefully, at the same time or in the same place.” For political theorist Michael Walzer, coexistence occurs when “groups of people with different histories, cultures, and identities” live together in a peaceful way.<sup>9</sup> At a 1987 conference in Malta on Muslim-Christian relations, the Grand Mufti of Syria, Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Amin Kufaro, stated that coexistence requires “two or more parties desiring to live together in peace, without dispute, quarrel or conflict.”<sup>10</sup> In discussing the historical and modern complexities of the relationship between Islam and the West, Princeton historian Bernard Lewis writes that in our contemporary world coexistence occurs on various levels—national, racial, social, ideological, and religious—and “implies a willingness to live at peace, and perhaps even in mutual respect, with others.”<sup>11</sup> Lewis argues that, ideally, meaningful,

pragmatic coexistence becomes an inherent right of “equality between the different groups composing a political society.”<sup>12</sup>

The Alan B. Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence and Coexistence International, both located in the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis University, are noteworthy collaborating projects seeking to strengthen and promulgate this important strategy of coexistence. For the several years, these programs have endeavored to develop and reinforce constructive strategies and education to benefit students, practitioners, and groups who are promoting coexistence at all levels of society. If one can agree that “when people of difference have learned to live together better” they are greater prepared to live life “with less fear,” and thus “have greater opportunities for growth as individuals and as a community,” then the value of such coexistence programs is easily evinced.<sup>13</sup> In a 2006 Coexistence International Report coexistence is succinctly encapsulated in these words: “Coexistence is a concept that encompasses a wide range of efforts at all societal levels to address the challenges that arise when different groups (such as cultural and religious groups) seek to live together. Coexistence practice aims to transform social and political relationships, structures, and discourse in a direction that favors reduction of violent and structural conflict. Coexistence interventions enhance the capacity of individuals, groups, and institutions to manage emerging conflicts nonviolently and constructively.”<sup>14</sup>

From this broad description one quickly discerns the expansiveness of coexistence as a multilevel idea that requires, for the purposes of dispute resolution and living together peacefully, a common commitment and a concurrent willingness to embrace nonviolent strategies for assuaging conflict. Importantly, from this perspective, although coexistence initiatives seek to lessen religious, cultural, and sociopolitical discord, there is an underlying recognition that identity conflict is frequently unavoidable and, when expressed nonviolently, can indeed become a facilitating prerequisite for coexistence, where tensions are addressed in a constructive environment of tolerance and mutual respect. Consequently, coexistence does not preclude clashing perspectives and policies; rather, it proscribes violence as an acceptable recourse for resolving said clashes—envisaging a global environment where “the use of weapons to resolve conflicts is increasingly obsolete.”<sup>15</sup>

Beyond abstract theories, coexistence is a pragmatic desideratum for reframing the complex inimical relationship between Islam and the West. In general, coexistence carries with it the positive recognition of lasting difference and involves a necessary tension that is tempered through attitudes of forbearance and humility, a shared desire for greater transparency and



understanding, and a willingness to utilize nonviolent discourse as the sole alternative for harmonizing dissonance. Coexistence is one manner for individuals and groups to perceive those who are different and is actualized when individuals, communities, and cultures cultivate practical policies and institutions (formal and informal) that proactively reflect positive perceptions of the Other and facilitate a peaceable environment that acknowledges the immutability of a diverse humanity. Michael Walzer is right: peaceful coexistence is “always a good thing.” And, tolerance, Walzer argues, is a very good thing—because it makes coexistence possible.<sup>16</sup> This project agrees and proffers tolerance as one practical and attainable transcultural strategy for affecting coexistence. Through a process of cross-cultural or intercivilizational analysis, this work aspires to demonstrate how tolerance emerges as one of the most effective means for achieving a specific goal of global importance—coexistence.

A compendious digression into the semantics of tolerance is necessary to make clear this author’s reason for preferring this cross-cultural concept of *tolerance* instead of *toleration*. Some writers, philosophers, and policy-makers use the terms *tolerance* and *toleration* interchangeably, while others are quick to distinguish. For the purposes of this exposition, *tolerance* is most appropriate and will be chiefly used. The primary distinction one can make between *toleration* and *tolerance* is that the former is principally a sociopolitical sanction or concession (often unprincipled in its motivation) by which the strong/majority officially “tolerate” the weak/minority, while the latter is primarily an attitude—a principled frame of mind—that is less dependent on the power posture of the agents in question.<sup>17</sup> Both *toleration* and *tolerance* may be characterized as strategies to be employed by individuals, communities, or regimes, but *toleration*, as an expedient concession, has more limited application than the attitudinal expressions of *tolerance*. *Tolerance*, when understood as a disposition, is a more fluid conception that is better able to speak to the difficult encounters with difference at all levels of human society: between two neighbors, among communities, across religions, and between cultures. Moreover, *tolerance*, unlike *toleration*, is often considered a trait or characteristic of an individual, community, or culture and is regarded by some to be a virtue as well. (This is discussed in greater detail in chapter three.)

The reader should note that, because a number of works and lectures referenced in this work do not distinguish between *tolerance* and *toleration*, both terms appear throughout this book. Instead of belaboring this excursion into the semantic distinctions between *tolerance* and *toleration*, one is best served, for the purposes of this project, to follow the efficacious advice of political theorist John Christian Laursen: when it comes to discussing

the conceptual incongruities of *toleration* and *tolerance* “there is nothing to be gained from overly technical distinctions that are not understood in ordinary language.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, this brief explanation of this project’s preference of *tolerance* will suffice. A more exacting task, and critical to this work, is to define and demonstrate how tolerance is an intercivilizational equivalence and an invaluable strategy for achieving a sustaining coexistence.

For the purpose of coexistence, a commitment to tolerance includes nonviolent disagreement, a disposition of humility, and a shared, persistent willingness to participate in proactive intercultural dialogue and international diplomacy. In a world of immutable difference, efforts to assess and reassess the strategy of tolerance and its acceptable limits are exceptionally meaningful. However, while the desire by most in the Islamic and Western worlds to reach coexistence is reasonably transparent, a mutually edifying understanding and appreciation of the malleable concept of tolerance is not as clear.

Moreover, the fortitude of this embattled concept is truly measured only when it is juxtaposed against a society’s religion—that is, its ultimate concern. Philosopher, ethicist, and political theorist J. Budziszewski poignantly portrays how the value and validity of tolerance will be determined by its ability to withstand the forcible “caustic” of religion. Religion “is where the ultimate concern is roused,” he writes, “and where all that it cannot suffer must suffer deliquescence.”<sup>19</sup> Is tolerance compatible with or in contradistinction to religion? Is tolerance a concept that resonates deeply with Islamic scripture and tradition? Or is tolerance a particular phenomenon of Western Christian civilization, progressively secularized and wholly realized through liberalism? And, if only for the temporal urgency of reaching coexistence, what political and pragmatic place is religious tolerance currently afforded in Western and Islamic culture? The answers to these profound questions are both elusive and disputed.

A handful of works from such scholars as Cary Nederman and John Christian Laursen offer a formidable challenge to liberalism’s unilateral claims of conceiving tolerance.<sup>20</sup> By demonstrating how tolerance has important roots in such diverse frameworks as medieval functionalism, Persian imperialism, Confucian tradition, economic expediency, religious pluralism, and rising nationalism, Nederman and Laursen’s edited works effectively dis sever tolerance from its Lockean and Enlightenment beginnings, demonstrating how disparate frameworks for the conceptualization of tolerance “were in circulation long before the late seventeenth century” and not confined to Western civilization. Indeed, such scholarship has “broadened and deepened” the conversation on tolerance.<sup>21</sup> Mindful of the current friction between Western and Islamic civilizations, this author

hopes to corroborate and contribute to this contemporary discourse by emphasizing how the idea of tolerance was and is an inherent principle and a historical practice within not only the Western tradition but also the Islamic tradition. This book seeks, in part, to examine various writings from historic and contemporary Muslim scholars on the theological and philosophical place of tolerance and provide some select examples of the historical practice of tolerance in Islamic history to show how the concept of tolerance is neither new nor entirely Western but rather finds deep and historical, philosophical, and theological roots within the Islamic tradition as well. The diverging Western and Islamic frameworks for tolerance must then be contrasted to assess their congruities and peculiarities, their strengths and weaknesses. This author believes that this comparative analysis will demonstrate how Islamic and Western civilizations, in fidelity to their history and traditions, can consent to a meaningful, cross-cultural understanding of tolerance derived from diverging paths, an understanding based not on compromise but on authentic human values.

Once the cross-cultural, interfaith validity of tolerance is evinced, there remains the arduous work of defining what this mutual tolerance actually means. Research into the idea of tolerance reveals a wide range of definitions and uses. Religion, culture, history, and geography are a few of the many variables that have influenced the conceptualization and application of tolerance. Depending largely upon experiential context, peoples have interpreted and employed the idea of tolerance differently. For instance, Historian Istvan Bejczy argues that the medieval conceptualization of tolerance is a “more coherent and forceful concept” than that employed in modern discourse, simply because medieval accounts of tolerance did not espouse religious liberty or embrace a relativity of truth.<sup>22</sup> Rather, the medieval idea of tolerance, following Aquinas, was not an obligation to love but, instead, a bridling of one’s hate.<sup>23</sup>

Michael Walzer’s pithy work, *On Toleration*, shows how conceptions of tolerating the Other occur along a vast contextual spectrum, where one extreme is simply a resignation to accept difference merely for the sake of peace and the other extreme is to enthusiastically and aesthetically endorse difference. Between these ends exist three additional descriptions of what it means to tolerate: 1) a passive expression of benign indifference; 2) “a principled recognition” of the rights of the Other, regardless if the Other “exercises those rights in unattractive ways”; and 3) a curiosity, openness, or “even respect,” toward the Other—“a willingness to listen and learn.” Indeed, to tolerate the other may include a “number of possibilities.”<sup>24</sup>

Whatever its original, authentic meaning, the understanding and application of the idea of tolerance has depended on the historical, geographical,

social, and religious realities that confronted a people and their culture. One would thus be mistaken to suggest the existence of one systematic conception of tolerance that has been affably and equally embraced across history by all cultures and all civilizations, regardless of context. Liberalism's enthusiastic endorsement of difference, to the point of indifference, stands in contrast to the resigned acceptance of difference for the sake of peace in the sixteenth-century's Peace of Augsburg. The respect and openness to the religious "stranger," espoused by Pakistan's founding fathers Ali Jinnah and Muhammad Iqbal, are distinct from Turkey's secular tendencies of discounting the importance of religious and cultural difference in public life. Yet, all of these examples attempt to deal with the concept of tolerance.

The various manners through which communities and civilizations seek to tolerate the Other are undeniably complex, and the vast array of definitions for tolerance has arguably inhibited the development of a mutually coherent meaning for Islamic and Western cultures. Thus, a concluding purpose of this book—beyond supporting tolerance as a principle inherent to both Western and Islamic civilizations and essential for coexistence—is to emphasize a sustainable concept of tolerance that is not only consistent with, but also intrinsic to both Western and Islamic traditions. A strategy of tolerance is necessary that not just accepts difference, but is, in fact, a product of the indestructibility of difference.<sup>25</sup> It is a concept that facilitates difference, not through an embrace of radical relativism, but through a recognition and appreciation of a culture's entitlement to absolutes. Further, in order to affect coexistence, a cross-cultural strategy of tolerance must be located that has transparent limitations, which allow communities and cultures to engage, and even preclude, those fanatical and militant individuals and groups within a society who, in lieu of cross-cultural efforts toward coexistence, advocate violent coercion as the only viable recourse for settling conflict.

Considering the "clash of civilizations" addressed earlier, it seems that the purposes of this work are well justified. There are a number of works that debate the place and meaning of tolerance within either Western or Islamic traditions or that discuss the idea of tolerance in general. Michael Walzer's *On Toleration* investigates "five models of a tolerant society," describing the positive and negative attributes of each framework. There are several edited works that discuss the various religious, philosophical, historical, and theoretical roots of tolerance within and beyond Western civilization.<sup>26</sup> In his book *Worlds of Difference*, political theorist Cary Nederman provides interesting insight into the prominent place of tolerance in the writings of orthodox and dissenting Western medieval

thinkers.<sup>27</sup> J. Budziszewski's *True Tolerance* offers a philosophical critique of contemporary liberal thought and its diluted (or misguided) conception of tolerance.<sup>28</sup> Khaled Abou El Fadl's "The Place of Tolerance in Islam" and Yohanan Friedmann's *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam* represent two distinct methodologies for addressing the conceptualization of tolerance in Islamic history and tradition.<sup>29</sup> Yet, this author's research has not discovered any contemporary attempts similar to this project's endeavor to address the need and strategy for reaching coexistence through a comparative, cross-cultural analysis of Islamic and Western conceptualizations of tolerance. If achieving coexistence between Western and Islamic civilizations is a realistic need and a cross-cultural aspiration, then the ascertainment of an equivalent and intrinsic understanding of tolerance is absolutely essential.

### Mapping the Intercivilizational Landscape of Tolerance

The scheme of this book follows its purpose: to demonstrate the diverging frameworks of Islamic and Western conceptualizations of tolerance and to identify a particular cross-cultural comprehension of tolerance as an effective strategy for effecting coexistence. Chapter one will address some of the strengths and weakness of cultural-comparative theorizing in explaining intercivilizational conflict. It will suggest a *qualified* cross-cultural comparative model as one limited but contributive method for understanding the current conflict between Western and Islamic cultures. Further, chapter one will show how the current dissonance between Western and Islamic civilizations and communities is a constructed reality in urgent need of resolution. It will discuss the major contemporary conflicts resulting from and exacerbating this cultural confrontation, as well as some of the major obstacles to achieving coexistence. In this context, the debate over the universal or relative nature of human rights will be briefly addressed.

Realizing the terrestrial limitations of the universal ambitions of Western and Islamic civilizations, the first chapter will suggest coexistence as a more sober but pragmatic and realizable alternative. A cross-cultural understanding of tolerance will then be proffered as an essential strategy for achieving coexistence, and an exploration of the diverging Western and Islamic frameworks for conceptualizing tolerance will be introduced as an effective comparative method for demonstrating the intercultural pedigree of this worthy strategy.

Chapter two will probe a diverse selection of Western frameworks of tolerance, contributing to the recent scholarship challenging liberalism's paternalistic claims of cultivating and perfecting this labyrinthine concept.

It will broadly trace the emergence, evolution, and elaboration of this concept across Western history through an examination of select writers on tolerance and the contexts within which they were conditioned. Chapter three will then consider Western civilization's modern and postmodern dilution and manipulation of tolerance and attempt to contribute to the reclamation of its more historically authentic purpose of living with and constructively engaging real difference.

Chapter four will analyze leading theological and metaphysical frameworks for tolerance intrinsic to Islamic civilization. It will consider various theological justifications and metaphysical ideologies for and against tolerance within Islamic history and tradition. Exploration of tolerance in Islamic civilization's historical praxes will be the purpose of chapter five. It will demonstrate the conceptual complexity of tolerance in Islamic tradition through a brief examination of three disparate examples of its understanding and application: the historical *dhimma*, Ottoman Turkey, and Mughal Pakistan. It will conclude with a brief synthesis of the various theological, philosophical, and historical conceptualizations of tolerance deciphered from within Islamic civilization.

While assaying to appreciate the semantic subtleties of certain Arabic words and expressions, this book has greatly benefited from primary texts translated and interpreted in English (and German) by some of the most capable Islamicists, past and present. In addition, although this writer dedicated much of his graduate education and postdoctoral research to the study of Islamic culture and politics, he undertakes the examination of tolerance in Islam acknowledging his non-Muslim identity and Western cultural lens. This author's examination of tolerance within the Islamic tradition was done with purposeful objectivity, adamantly aware of his "outsider" perspective and yet cautiously hopeful that this transparent undertaking will be widely received for its balanced, cross-cultural, inclusive purpose of locating an intercivilizational schema for sustainable coexistence through the irreplaceable human strategy of tolerance.

Chapter seven will reassert the importance of coexistence and the need for tolerance, summarizing the common and distinguishing characteristics of these two civilizational uses of tolerance. This chapter will then identify a particular cross-cultural conception of tolerance as an effective strategy for achieving and sustaining coexistence. Despite the disparate religious, sociopolitical, and historical realities from which tolerance has sprung this chapter will emphasize the ability of both Islamic and Western cultures to embrace a mutually endorsed understanding of tolerance as an essential strategy for realizing coexistence, as well as an effective method

for expressing cross-cultural, interfaith values such as liberty, justice, peace, humility, and human dignity.

This book is purposefully interdisciplinary. It benefits from several disciplines, including intellectual and social history, political theory, comparative religions, and international relations. It is expected that the interdisciplinary format of this project will prove useful and successful.

# Colliding or Converging Civilizations?

As the cycle of violence that now embraces the planet continues in its seemingly uncontrollable orbit, Western and Islamic civilizations are moving further and further away from their cherished ideas of justice, compassion, and wisdom . . . In sum, the current crisis is nothing short of a challenge to the very identity of humankind as a caring and thinking species

—Akbar Ahmed

“**W**herever one turns, the world is at odds with itself. If differences in civilization are not responsible for these conflicts, what is?” So states Samuel Huntington in response to critics of his “Clash of Civilizations” hypothesis. “History has not ended,” and “the world is not one,” Huntington declares. And if it is civilizations that “unite and divide humankind,” then “in a world of different civilizations . . . each will have to learn to coexist with the other.”<sup>1</sup> From this viewpoint, a cultural-comparative paradigm becomes one useful framework for exploring the conflicts that are occurring between Islamic and Western cultures and how coexistence may be effectively conceived.

When discussing conflicts between *civilizations* or *cultures*, one can easily become preoccupied with the disputed meanings of such broad and ambiguous terms. A brief discussion on meaning is necessary, therefore, to determine how *culture* or its cognate (at the widest level) *civilization* might be defined when used as a comparative term. The *American Heritage Dictionary* (1996) offers one possible meaning of *civilization*: “the type of culture and society developed by a particular nation or region or in a particular epoch.” One may think of the Mayan civilization or the civilization of Ancient Greece. Likewise, the same dictionary defines *culture* as particular “patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population.” “Elizabethan culture,”



“Chinese culture,” and “a culture of violence”: these are all examples that may fit within this broad understanding of culture. Certainly, *civilization* and *culture* are broad terms with many disputed meanings. Huntington offers three ways in which *culture* may be understood:

First, culture may refer to the products of a society. People speak of a society’s high culture—the art, literature, music—and its popular or folk culture. Second, anthropologists speak of culture in a much broader sense to mean the entire way of life of a society, its institutions, social structure, family structure, and the meanings people attribute to these. Finally, other scholars, perhaps particularly political scientists, see culture as something subjective, meaning the beliefs, values, attitudes, orientations, assumptions, philosophy, *Weltanschauung* of a particular group of people. However it is defined, villages, clans, regions, nations, and, at the broadest level, civilizations, have distinct cultures.<sup>2</sup>

Civilization represents the most expansive cultural unit.<sup>3</sup> And it is primarily at the level of civilization that this project will examine the conflicts, as well as potential for coexistence, between Islamic and Western cultures.

### **Limitations of a Comparative (Cross-Cultural) Paradigm**

Arguably, in contemporary global society, culture is consequential. Conflict and coexistence largely depend on cross-cultural dissonance or harmony. Samuel Huntington describes the twenty-first century as the “century of culture,” with cooperation and confrontation among cultures providing a central ingredient for understanding human behavior—religiously, socially, economically, and politically.<sup>4</sup> “What ultimately counts for people is not political ideology or economic interest,” he argues. Rather, “faith and family, blood and belief, are what people identify with and what they will fight and die for.” It is for this reason that the “clash of civilizations” is today’s “central phenomenon of global politics.”<sup>5</sup> Brigham Young law professor Cole Durham agrees. He likens contemporary tensions between civilizations to the “vast tectonic plates beneath the surface of the earth” that cause the earth to quake (often violently) whenever they collide. These cultural divides provide constructive, albeit limited, explanations for many contemporary conflicts, and the current seismic dissonance between Muslim and Western worlds may represent the most recent earthshaking activity in the “long-term historical struggles between rival civilizations.”<sup>6</sup>

Khaled Abou El Fadl, professor of Islamic law at the University of California at Los Angeles, acknowledges the primitive binary stimulant within human beings to create an “us versus them” perception of the world.

In contrast, however, because we are also social beings, he suggests that there is an innate need within us to engage and cooperate with different communities.<sup>7</sup> Abou El Fadl demonstrates how this duality of human behavior was expressed prior to modernity:

In the premodern age, although there is clear evidence of a strong binary impulse pervading both the Muslim and Western worlds, considering the scientific and intellectual achievements of Muslims, the Christian and Jewish bigotry towards Muslims had to be tempered by the element of need. Both Jews and Christians could not help but be influenced by Muslim intellectual products, and this made the dynamics with Islam complex and multi-faceted.<sup>8</sup>

In today's context, however, the binary impulse to categorize Muslims as the baneful Other, argues Abou El Fadl, goes "largely unchallenged by the absence of need, or the relative sufficiency of the West, and the dependency of the Muslim world."<sup>9</sup> This apparent absence of need for the intellectual products of Muslim culture, coupled with the effects of recent terrorist attacks and various "offensive incidents" in the area of human rights, has caused many to place Islamic civilization in direct opposition and conflict with Western tradition.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, Abou El Fadl and a number of other scholars urge caution when using a civilizational paradigm to explain recurring conflicts between Islam and the West. "Claims of civilizational distinctiveness and conflict," warns Abou El Fadl, "are fraught with conceptual pitfalls."<sup>11</sup>

Opponents of the cross-cultural paradigm argue that such a theoretical model does not adequately account for the complexities and variances within each civilization and is thus susceptible to faulty interpretations. For example, Abou El Fadl characterizes recent human rights atrocities in the Muslim world, which have taken place under the name of Islam, as a "vulgarization of contemporary Islam," and he questions how a civilizational methodology can adequately account for intracivilizational Muslim struggles over what are and are not genuine values and characteristics of Islamic culture. Indeed, one must question any methodology that indiscriminately vindicates "acts of extreme ugliness and vulgarity as authentic expressions of civilizational distinctiveness or particularity."<sup>12</sup>

Fred Halliday, professor of international relations at the London School of Economics, points to another deficiency of the cultural-comparative model. A civilizational paradigm reinforces public stereotypes of Muslims and non-Muslims through its simplified "two-sided" identification: Western or Islamic. Such simplification neglects the complexity of difference within civilizations and the complicated interaction across cultures.

On the one hand, using “Islamic civilization” as a formulaic reference for over one 1.3 billion Muslims, who represent a diversity of languages, ethnicities, and family structures, and a majority in over four dozen countries across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, can become a dangerous oversimplification.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, academic and policy efforts to compartmentalize Western civilization have a tendency to interpolate generalizations that overlook the complex diversity of ideas and peoples that comprise the Muslim world. Such labels are prone to dismiss the internal conflicts taking place within civilizations and ignore the pluralistic character of Islamic and Western worlds. There is always the potential of associating certain sociopolitical mores—good or bad—as characteristic of a culture without considering whether or not those particularities are being contested by the various interpretive communities inside that civilization. Thus, as Abou El Fadl cautions, a “clash of civilizations” model has an underlying tendency of compacting complicated sociopolitical and historical forces into neat, compartmentalized categories that only “obfuscate the real dynamics that are, in fact, taking place” within a civilization.<sup>14</sup> Abou El Fadl offers the truculent religion of Osama Bin Laden to prove this point: “Acts of cruelty, such as Bin Laden’s terrorism, are not simply the product of an invented system of thought that can be treated as a marginal idiosyncrasy in modern Islam. . . . Rather, the violence of someone like Bin Laden is an integral part of the struggle between interpretive communities over who gets to speak for Islam and how.”<sup>15</sup>

Which Muslim nation, community, or individual represents Islam? In the same way, which Western nation, ideology, or denomination rightly reflects Western civilization? A cultural-comparative model for understanding and mediating civilizational differences and conflict must consider the complex dynamics associated with intracultural struggles if it is to more accurately examine the normative principles and historical experiences that drive civilizations.

Perhaps an even greater difficulty attributed to cultural-comparative theorizing is its propensity to overemphasize cultural differences, thereby neglecting common values and goals that may facilitate meaningful intercivilizational interaction. While one may agree with Huntington’s theory that a conflict between Islam and the West has occurred, a less palatable aspect of his theory is that states and cultures will always require an “enemy” or “conflict.” Theories of intercommunal conflict fail when they resist any suggestion of “neutral zones of influence” or the desire of peace and coexistence by those on either side of the conflict.<sup>16</sup> To exclude the possibility of living together peacefully is to accept, in perpetuity, an unchanging world of violent difference. Resignation to perpetual conflict and

intolerance must not be the last word. That Western and Islamic cultures bear distinct characteristics and cultural peculiarities does not preclude transcultural efforts to locate those moral judgments and values that are normative to both.

Much is being written today about the importance of cultural values and the impact they have on transnational conflicts and violence. Khaled About El Fadl and others acknowledge how the cultural-comparative model, despite (or because of) its limitations, has generated a corpus of literature and trenchant debate over the past decade.<sup>17</sup> Susceptible to misinterpreting what constitutes a culture's unique essence, Huntington's paradigm could lead to many damaging ramifications: namely, further confusing the complicated relationship between Islam and the West, exacerbating prejudice, and deepening intercommunal conflict. Nevertheless, a cultural-comparative model retains a *qualified* viability as one systematic alternative for examining conflict between Islamic and Western cultures; if anything, it is a "useful starting point for understanding and coping with the changes going on in the world."<sup>18</sup>

It is inevitable that a culture's ideas, interpretations, and interests will, at some juncture, conflict with those of the Other. While we cannot completely eliminate such conflicts, we can continue to proffer systematic mechanisms for explaining and, perhaps, resolving those conflicts through processes of mutual understanding and nonviolent engagement rather than animosity and belligerence. A cultural-comparative methodology proffers an expressly limited scaffolding for framing this transnational conflict and examining possible paths to reconciliation and coexistence. It provides one possible way to cautiously embrace the importance of civilizational distinctiveness and cultural essence in an effort, not only to understand and appreciate human difference, but also to reaffirm those moral precepts that transcend human divisions, thus revealing a common heritage of values across civilizations. Former European Commission President Jacques Delors (1985–1995) vocalized support for such an approach in the West. Because "future conflicts will be sparked by cultural factors rather than economics or ideology," he reasoned, "the West needs to develop a deeper understanding of the religious and philosophical assumptions underlying other civilizations, and the way other nations see their interests, to identify what we have in common."<sup>19</sup> From this perspective, cultural-comparative modeling is not intended to identify civilizational differences for the purpose of vilifying the Other. On the contrary, it becomes a useful framework of mutual respect and nonviolent discourse, one that encourages the discovery and employment of pan-cultural mores to facilitate coexistence.

## Capturing the Conflict

Any attempt to organize or categorize human beings—on any level—is burdened with obstacles and necessitates qualifications. This project recognizes the many deficiencies associated with a cultural-comparative model: most significantly, its proneness to generalize and misinterpret cultures and its tendency to neglect cross-cultural *equivalences*. Cognizant of the potential pitfalls of a cultural-comparative framework, this project must, nevertheless, avow the existence of conflict between Islam and the West. Much of the relationship between Western and Muslim worlds has been attitudinized by fear, animosity, and resentment. Thus, the purpose of this chapter, in part, is to emphasize how the current discord between Western and Islamic civilizations is a conceived reality that cannot be gainsaid or simply dismissed as exaggerated or peripheral in nature. Inimical feelings and general animosity toward the Other continue to cultivate intercultural divisions. While various “clashes” between cultures may have been perpetrated through “vulgar” interpretations of Islamic or Western culture, this has not prevented misunderstandings of the Other or tendencies to revert back to a binary arrangement for explaining cross-cultural dissonance and violence.

Historical context is an important variable when considering behaviors and values competing for allegiance within, as well as across civilizations. The consequence of fluid cultural variables—religious, social, political, geographic, etc.—is the evolution of interpretations of what it means to be part of a Western or Islamic civilization. These multifaceted complexities provide important limitations to a civilizational paradigm but do not preclude its usefulness as a “starting point” for cautiously observing the reality of contemporary frictions between Western and Islamic cultures. This chapter focuses on some of the major contemporary conflicts influenced by and exacerbating this cross-cultural “clash” in a way that acknowledges rather than devalues *intracultural* complexities and struggles.

Second, this chapter not only addresses the volatile dynamics associated with competing Islamic and Western civilizations, but will also emphasize their potential for coexistence. Consequently, it will pivot from dealing with present realities of transcultural conflict and the urgent need of resolution to setting out a proposal for realizing coexistence through the cross-cultural value of tolerance. Encouragingly, there are prominent dissident voices competing within Western and Islamic civilizations that obviate attempts to simplify this cross-cultural conflict into a two-sided debate, where one side is simply an uncompromising antipode to the other. In fact, there is a multiplicity of interpretations competing within the “evolving

and shifting contexts” of Western and Islamic civilizations.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, there are important values that bridge cultural divides, finding intellectual and practical origins within both Western and Islamic traditions. These intercivilizational values transcend the limitations of any artificial systematic framework and address sociohistorical realities in a way that positively reinforces meaningful dialogue toward lasting coexistence. Tolerance, it will be argued, is one of these values, urgently meriting cross-cultural recognition.

### **Western Fears: Real and Imagined**

On September 20, 2001, in one of the most anticipated speeches in American history, President George W. Bush described the state of the nation following the violent attacks of September 11. “Americans have many questions tonight,” he declared. “Americans are asking: Who attacked our country?” Who was to blame for such an atrocity? The answer was militant Muslim extremists. Al-Qaeda was responsible for the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, and the destruction of this terrorist organization became the focal point of the West’s new war on terrorism. Western heads of state went to great lengths to describe the ensuing war on terrorism as one against violent extremists, such as al-Qaeda, and not against Muslims in general.<sup>21</sup> Bush explained in his address:

These terrorists [al-Qaeda] practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics—a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists’ directive commands them to kill the Christian and Jews, to kill all Americans, and to make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children . . . The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.<sup>22</sup>

To an attentive audience in America and across the world, Bush described how al-Qaeda was connected to numerous other Islamic terrorist groups across the Muslim world. “There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries,” and their overarching agenda is “to plot evil and destruction,” he warned. Violent Islamic radicals were to blame, but for many in the West, following September 11, Islam, in general, became the scapegoat of terrorism—the root cause of the problem.

Less than three years later, Islamic militants were implicated in the March 11, 2004, train bombings in Madrid that killed almost 200 people

and wounded hundreds more. Although people in Spain were accustomed to sporadic violence from such home-grown groups as the Basque separatist movement, ETA, the March 11 bombings represented the most destructive and deadly terrorist attack in modern Spanish history. Exacerbating the already rising fears of national security, Spanish counterterrorism officials indicated that, following the coordinated bombings of March 11, a sequence of violent attacks had been intended by the terrorists; they were likely hindered, however, when seven militants detonated a bomb in their residence in Leganes as Spanish police converged on the location. While the authenticity of its confession remains highly suspect, *al-Quds al-Arabi*, a London-based Arabic newspaper, reported receiving written correspondence from the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades (named after a former lieutenant of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden) claiming responsibility for the March 11 attacks.<sup>23</sup> The letter claimed that the train bombings were carried out to settle “old accounts with Spain, the crusader” (in reference to the fifteenth-century *Reconquista* on the Iberian Peninsula, perhaps).<sup>24</sup> A subsequent letter from this elusive group also repeated a warning al-Qaeda gave in 2003, regarding Spain’s fealty toward the “Crusaders” (i.e. the United States and Britain) and their war in Iraq. The warning promised a cessation of violence if Spain would cease supporting the war in Iraq and keep out of Muslim matters: “The leadership has chosen to suspend all operations in Spain against civilian targets, until we know the stance of the new government which has promised to withdraw Spanish forces from Iraq, and until we confirm the non-interference of the new government in Muslim affairs.”<sup>25</sup> Whether or not it was influenced by threats of more violence, Spain’s new socialist government swiftly shifted policy, promptly withdrawing all troops from Iraq—possibly (but doubtfully) excising Spain from the Muslim terrorists’ topography of war.

Less than sixteen months after the terrorist attacks in Spain, Muslim extremists bombed London’s underground train system and one of its double-decker buses. Fifty-two people were killed and seven hundred were injured. One London survivor, Garri Holness, recovering in a hospital after losing his left leg in the attack, told *BBC News* that he pitied his attackers and detested those who “brainwashed” them: “The people that have brainwashed them and got them to do that, these are the people that I hate. Because these people are turning people against Muslims. Because they have taken part of the Koran, little sections of it, switched it round, watered it down and brainwashed individuals to believe what they are doing is correct.”<sup>26</sup> Immediately following the terrorist bombings against London’s transportation system on July 7, 2005, a *Telegraph* YouGov survey indicated that 82 percent of Britons polled were immediately convinced, with evidence yet to be presented, that

Islamic extremists were responsible for the coordinated bombings. Sixty-two percent of those polled agreed that Britain's security services should focus their intelligence-gathering and terrorism-prevention efforts on Muslims now living in England or attempting to immigrate there. Most significantly, perhaps, the number who believed that Islam—beyond fundamentalist Islamic groups—posed a threat to western liberal democracy rose from 32 percent just after the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center to 46 percent.<sup>27</sup> The enduring trauma of these terrorist attacks continues to leave many Westerners angry, alarmed, and filled with an apprehensive awareness that terroristic violence carried out by Muslim radicals against the Western Other will not evanesce anytime soon—it is likely to remain a habitual security concern for twenty-first-century Europeans and Americans alike.

Of great concern to many in the West is this largely indefensible and indiscriminate strategy of suicide-bombing now employed by Muslim terrorists on American and European landmarks and public spaces. Moreover, the attacks in Spain and England demonstrate the growing independence of terrorist groups now operating in Europe, many of whom are inspired by Osama bin Laden but acting autonomously and locally, rearing a radicalized cohort from within Western communities. (The failed terrorist car bomb attacks in London and explosive crash into the Glasgow airport in July 2007 are a few examples reinforcing this worry of a homegrown radicalization.)<sup>28</sup> French political scientist Olivier Roy purports that Muslim extremists operating in Europe (arguably, the West in general) can be broadly classified into three categories, the first order being foreign residents, exemplified most clearly by the 9/11 terrorists. This category of Islamic radicals consists of Muslims who have left the Muslim world “as political refugees, or students, who speak Arabic, and who are from middle-class backgrounds . . . they become born again Muslims only after coming to Europe and before joining a radical group.” The second order consists of native-born, second-generation European Muslims whose first language is a European one, who are European citizens, and who likely live in one of Europe's ghettoized neighborhoods. (Roy mentions three of the terrorists implicated in the 2005 London bombings to illustrate this second profile.) European converts, likely indoctrinated while in prison, represent the final and undoubtedly smallest category.<sup>29</sup> In any case, a growing awareness among Westerners of this indigenizing trend has raised concern that this once-foreign threat of Islamic extremism will continue to cultivate domestic roots.

In his masterful inquiry into the effects Westernization and globalization have had on the religious interpretations and expressions of emigrating



Muslims, entitled *Globalised Islam*, Olivier Roy writes that “neofundamentalism” continues to attract “rootless Muslim youth, particularly among second- and third-generation migrants in the West.” And this phenomenon of radicalization of a minority of young Muslims in Europe is simply a “means of rejecting integration into Western society.”<sup>30</sup> “It is a fact,” writes Tunisian historian Muhammad Talbi, “that most Muslim immigrants do not become integrated in the West, and their rate of demographic growth, which in the long run can upset certain balances, gives reason for fear.”<sup>31</sup> The weeks of violent protests and rioting across France at the close of 2005 by apoplectic Muslim youths living in deprived immigrant enclaves is certainly indicative of this societal imbalance.

Civilizational fault lines are pulsating as integrating processes of globalization and east-to-west migration accelerate interdependence between global and local—in rapid form, the Muslim foreigner is becoming the Western resident. Learning to coexist with the Other has become just as much a domestic question in the West as it is an intracivilizational one. Mahmoud Ayoub, professor of comparative religions at Temple University, is right to state that today’s global landscape, where “millions of Muslims are now citizens of Western Christian countries,” offers a historically unique opportunity for mapping an engaging “dialogue of life” between “next-door neighbors.”<sup>32</sup> Regrettably, notwithstanding this hopeful demographic observation, misunderstanding of and animosity toward the Other continue to epitomize the prevailing Western worldview. Despite civilizational parapets being breached through the “homogenizing” strategies of globalization and massive immigration, the imperfect integration (or expedient assimilation) of the Other “has not solved the problem of identity and difference, but somehow intensified it.”<sup>33</sup>

Local Muslim communities throughout the West continue to feel the aftershocks of the terrorist attacks, indicated by numerous cases of Islamophobia. Religious studies professor Gören Larsson conducted a survey on the situation of Islamic communities in Sweden following the September 11 attacks in the United States. His data concluded that the Muslim population in Sweden (approximately 300,000) was significantly affected by a growing anti-Muslim attitude.<sup>34</sup> Larsson highlights two examples in Gothenburg where a taxi driver with a “Muslim-sounding name (Ali)” was severely attacked and bomb threats were made against an Ahmadiyya mosque.<sup>35</sup> According to Larsson, despite the fact that the largest Sunni youth organization in Sweden—the Young Muslims—adamantly denounced the terrorist attacks, and even though Sweden’s Muslim leaders concerted public efforts to explain how authentic Islam could never justify such violence, such efforts have had minimal effect on

tempering “public opinion generally.” Larsson ultimately agrees with another of Sweden’s professors, Anne Sofie Roald (a convert to Islam), when he states that even in remote countries such as Sweden, Muslims are in large measure being blamed for the terrorist violence taking place elsewhere in the West.<sup>36</sup>

Following the gruesome murder of the controversial film director Theo van Gogh by a radicalized Moroccan-Dutchman, the Netherlands, known for its high degree of tolerance, recoiled in shock as intercommunal tensions quickly reached volatile levels. Van Gogh’s murder was a premeditated reaction to the filmmaker’s explicit condemnation of the oppression of women under Islam, and the convicted twenty-six year old Dutch Muslim, Mohammed Bouyeri, swore to repeat such violence if allowed the opportunity.<sup>37</sup> Many within the Netherlands have expressed concern that any further terrorist attacks in the country could lead to a prolonged period of intercultural conflict and insecurity, putting the Netherlands’ historically high standards of freedom in jeopardy. In his *Murder in Amsterdam*, Ian Buruma puts forth a telling reflection of the conflicting Dutch sociopolitical and cultural milieus just prior to and since Van Gogh’s murder, exposing the wide spectrum of sensible and extreme perspectives competing for the public’s allegiance. Typifying one reactionary extreme, Matt Herben, a leader of the Netherlands’s anti-immigration, populist LFP (Lijst Pim Fortuyn) party, referenced Van Gogh’s murder to illustrate how a clash of civilizations was infiltrating the Netherlands: “Society is being threatened by extremists who spit on our culture. They don’t even speak our language and walk around in funny dresses. They are a fifth column. Theo said this better than anyone.”<sup>38</sup> (Of course, Van Gogh’s murderer, Mohammed Bouyeri, spoke Dutch quite fluently.) Contemplating the various venues of violence throughout Europe in the past two years, urban sociology professor Paul Scheffer of Amsterdam University urged calm and reconciliation: “If there is more violence like we’ve seen in Madrid and London, and in the Netherlands, it will become very difficult to live together in a peaceful way. We should try to do everything we can to achieve that—because otherwise everyone loses out.”<sup>39</sup>

In 1988, Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, issued an irrevocable fatwa calling for the execution of Britain’s Indian-born Salman Rushdie because of his highly controversial novel *The Satanic Verses*, which some Muslims argued was filled with blasphemous references toward the Prophet, the Qur’an, and Islam in general. The Shi’i leader, Khomeini, broadcasted his authoritative opinion on Tehran Radio: “I inform the proud Muslim people of the world that the author of the Satanic Verses book, which is against Islam, the Prophet and the Qur’an,

and all those involved in its publication who are aware of its content are sentenced to death.” The work was banned in a number of majority Muslim countries, and Rushdie was forced into hiding; he is still unable to move about openly. For nearly two decades this controversial novel and subsequent fatwa have been debated and discussed, symbolizing, for many, the ideological chasm between Islam and the West. The underlying shibboleths, it seems, are the West’s unabashed embrace of free speech and the Islamic world’s uncompromising reverence for its ultimate concern.

In June 2007, the divisive issue resurfaced when Salman Rushdie was conferred knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II for services to literature, outraging Muslims from Pakistan to Malaysia and precipitating a series of diplomatic rows. Many Muslims claimed the event showed gross insensitivity by the British government and a blatant Western attempt to arouse anger across the Muslim world, further instigating a cultural clash. In the West, some were equally startled by the united deprecation that quickly flowed from the Islamic world and how the Muslim ire toward Rushdie’s work twenty years earlier remained firmly entrenched in the Muslim world’s collective psyche. Regarding the knighting, the director of the English branch of Pen, Jonathan Heawood, stated that he and his colleagues were “taken aback, by the scale of reaction.” Nonetheless, “we don’t regret it,” he continued, and “we will continue to support Salman Rushdie as we support over 1,000 writers around the world who have been persecuted as a result of their writing.”<sup>40</sup>

Is a global clash between Islam and the West taking place? Can cultural differences explain this increase in violent confrontation? Have these militant Islamic extremists permanently changed the social and political fabric of the West? Many Westerners are answering these difficult questions in the affirmative. While Islamic radicals are the clear perpetrators of recent terrorist attacks (as well as many foiled attempts), some in the West are readily identifying Islamic tradition in general as the root cause of the current conflict, and, whether through banal discrimination upon Muslim immigrants in the *dar al-harb* or military and diplomatic pressure against the *dar al-Islam*, Western efforts to counter these real or imagined threats have begun.

It is important to emphasize that there are undaunted Muslim voices within and beyond Islamic civilization wholly condemning Muslims who, in the name of Islam, condone or carry out violence against innocent humanity. They are refuting the theological and juridical justifications of Muslim extremists, calling such violence antithetical to the teachings and tradition of Islam. For example, Jordan’s King Abdullah II led a conference of 180 Muslim imams and sheiks in 2005, where a collective decree

endorsed by followers of all schools of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) was issued that prohibited the declaration of *takfir* (apostate) against any Muslim. The declaration directly challenged al-Qaeda's theological strategy of condemning those Muslims who oppose its militant interpretation of Islam. In addition, the statement forbade edicts from being issued by unqualified Muslim scholars.<sup>41</sup> Turkey's Fethullah Gülen, Iran's Abdolkarim Soroush, Tunisia's Muhammad Talbi, and Syria's Muhammad Habash are just a few of the Muslim leaders and intellectuals within the *dar al-Islam* who are courageously contrasting the religious ideology of Muslim militants with their own sincere beliefs in Islam's benevolence and humaneness. In the West, a thirty-second public service announcement entitled "Not in the Name of Islam" was circulated in English, Arabic, and Urdu by the Council on American-Islamic Relations, condemning militant Muslim terrorism as outside of and contrary to Islam.<sup>42</sup> Prominent Western Muslim scholars such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, and Abdulaziz A. Sachedina have effectively criticized Islamic extremism, showing how Islam is the embodiment of mercy, justice, and peace, capable of cultivating a high degree of tolerance, human rights, and democracy.<sup>43</sup>

Nevertheless, such attempts to reclaim Islam as a religion of peace and charity have been almost completely overshadowed by the amplified violence carried out by Islam's radical adherents and the global publicity given to Muslims who support or justify the brutal strategies of terrorism. To be sure, the majority of "air time" regarding Islam and the Muslim world prior to September 11, 2001, already cast them in a negative light. And when Western media televised such instances as Muslim women rejoicing and dancing in revelry over the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States, its negative reverberations across Western society only induced greater trepidation, aggravating a growing disdain toward the Muslim Other.<sup>44</sup> Abou El Fadl laments how the modern "vulgarization of Islam" has further damaged global perceptions of the Muslim world:

In recent times, Muslim societies have been plagued by many events that have struck the world as offensive and even shocking. This has reached the extent that, from Europe and the United States to Japan, China, and Russia, one finds that Islamic culture has become associated with harshness and cruelty in the popular imagination of people from various nations around the world. When one interacts with people from different parts of the world, one consistently finds that the image of Islam is not that of a humanistic or humane religion. In fact, for many non-Muslims around the world, Islam has become the symbol for a draconian tradition that exhibits little compassion or mercy towards human beings.<sup>45</sup>

There is a Western propensity, in the aftermath of violence from Muslim terrorists, to misinterpret such flagrant violations of human rights as a distinct and immutable part of Muslim cultures and the Islamic creed. An appreciation of the complex social, political, and historical dynamics and interpretations competing within Islamic civilization and the “gross misuse of the doctrines and traditions of Islamic law”<sup>46</sup> by Islamic puritans in the contemporary era have been largely dismissed in the West, as fear and anger against the relentless terrorism of Islamic radicals continues to fester and overshadow any attempts at coherent dialogue. Perhaps, for the moment, Huntington’s preconceived cultural clash is underway. Of course, this conflict between cultures is not one-sided. At the same time, and for a plethora of reasons, cultural insecurity and resentment are concrete realities within the *dar al-Islam* as well.

### A Multidimensional Conflict

Muslim countries throughout Africa, the Middle East, and Asia have spent the last half-century recovering from the social, political, and economic effects of Western colonialism. Progress within these post-colonial societies was further inhibited by the exploitation of competing Cold War interests and interventions. Some Muslim societies have fared better than others in reconciling the ideologies and political systems imposed by foreign powers with their own religious beliefs, languages, historical imagination, and cultural peculiarities. Yet, much of the Islamic world is recoiling against what it perceives as geopolitical meddling from Western powers and moral contamination from a globalizing Western culture. The resurgence of political Islam throughout the Muslim world in recent decades represents one attempt to inoculate Muslim communities from the infectious influences of the West. Perhaps the Iranian Revolution of 1979 represents the apex of modern Islamic revivalism. But one can also point to the contemporary efforts to re-Islamicize society in Egypt, Syria, Sudan, and Algeria; the increasing “Islamic activism” in Palestine and Lebanon; and the growing “power of Islamic parties” and Islamic revivalism in Indonesia, Pakistan, Malaysia, and even Turkey.<sup>47</sup> Even in the delta state of Bangladesh—a majority Muslim country once touted by the West for its democratic and secular foundations—one can see the encroaching influence of political Islam (in particular, the Jamaat-e-Islami) on its once open and free public square. A western-influenced secularism is blamed by some Bangladeshis as the source of the country’s political and socioeconomic ills. Though openly recognizing the reality of a limited religious pluralism in Bangladesh (roughly fourteen percent Hindu and one percent Christian

and Buddhist) and the country's rich history of interreligious tolerance, the Jamaat-e-Islami and other lesser Islamic groups are gradually, and successfully, injecting a more puritanical interpretation of Islam into the cultural and political mainstream, advocating Islamic revival as the only solution potent enough to address the belligerent political gridlock and rampant corruption plaguing the country's domestic political scene.

George Washington University professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr has written of a "widely prevalent desire" among a large majority of Muslims in the contemporary Islamic world to "preserve their religious and cultural identity," to break from the Western jurisprudence imposed upon the Muslim world during the colonial era, and to restore the *shari'a* (divine law) as the primary source of law. Thus, there is a concerted effort within the contemporary Muslim world to shield the Islamic way of life from further Western encroachment by bringing "the various parts of the Islamic world and the Islamic people (*al-ummah*) closer together" and through reaffirming "the intellectual, cultural, and artistic traditions of Islam."<sup>48</sup> An uncompromising return to faith and tradition is deemed a sure way to preserve community identity and rebuff Western threats to the honor of Islam.

Is Western culture becoming a global culture, threatening the distinct essence of Islamic culture? Many in the Muslim world answer with an emphatic *yes*. A host of modern thinkers and twentieth-century Muslim movements were formed in response to the "Westernizing" of Muslim communities and Islamic culture. Khurram Murad, a conservative intellectual thinker and activist in the contemporary Islamic resurgence and a member of the Pakistani-based Islamic revivalist group Jamaat-e-Islami (the Islamic Society), attempts to articulate for Muslims the root causes of the historical clash between Islam and Western civilizations. He begins by emphasizing the West's material and political exploitation of Islamic lands: "No doubt, the West has its own . . . interests to pursue. Arab oil and the vast petro-resource are important for it. Israel implant[ed] in [the] heart of [the] Muslim world . . . becomes apprehensible. Intent to enslave Muslim rulers has firmly been established now when we see a vast network of Western army installations in the Middle East, which negotiate nothing besides weakening the Muslim countries in all respects. Moreover, the Western countries are tightening the noose around Muslim nations posing [a] threat to their interests anywhere on globe [*sic*]."<sup>49</sup>

Within the Muslim world, Western civilization is widely perceived as an imperialist oppressor that pursues its global economic and geopolitical interests at the expense of politically, economically, and militarily depressed Muslim societies. Muslim educationist and political activist Khurshid Ahmed, discussing U.S. leadership and the global conscience,

laments America's forcible spread of Western democracy and rhetorically inquires why U.S. President George Bush "and his cronies . . . never stop to ponder what the people, on whom they want to impose their version of democracy, think about Mr. Bush and the U.S. policies."<sup>50</sup>

Many Muslims resent attempts to use Western practices and interpretations as the scales for weighing the merits of Islamic civilization and the worthiness of its distinct qualities. They point to the hypocrisy and inconsistency between "Western idealism" and "Western pragmatism." University of California–Berkeley professor Saba Mahmood questions the double standards of the West, as geopolitical policies, for example, often contradict stated principles. Why, she asks, would the United States and other Western liberal democracies aid and enable Islamic states that have committed the most blatant infractions against democracy, such as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait?<sup>51</sup> Samuel Huntington echoes the same concern regarding the antinomy between Western policies and principles: "Democracy is promoted, but not if it brings Islamic fundamentalist to power; nonproliferation is preached for Iran and Iraq, but not for Israel . . . human rights are an issue with China, but not with Saudi Arabia; aggression against oil-owning Kuwaitis is repulsed with massive force, but not so aggression against oil-less Bosnians."<sup>52</sup> The reality behind ostentatious claims of universality, concludes Huntington, is inevitably "hypocrisy and double standards."<sup>53</sup> Western systems of limited government (popular sovereignty), free markets, disunion of spiritual and temporal authority, human rights, social pluralism, and individualism represent a nonexhaustive enumeration of ideals that, when uniquely blended together, symbolize a distinct socioethical mosaic of Western civilization. Huntington readily concedes that such characteristics were neither always present in Western civilization nor absent from other civilizations. Rather, it is the unique contextual combination of these values that symbolizes the essence of Western civilization.<sup>54</sup> Huntington argues that the self-righteous and promiscuous attempt by the West to directly or indirectly permeate Islamic civilization (and all other civilizations) with its conceived combination of universal values "is immoral in its implications."<sup>55</sup> While some Muslim individuals and communities may espouse some combination of the values embraced in the West, the prevailing response in "non-Western cultures range from skepticism to intense opposition." "Universalism to the West" is, in Huntington's words, "imperialism to the rest."<sup>56</sup>

A number of centerpiece issues are precluding a more favorable view of the Other. The Arab-Israeli conflict in Palestine remains a primary cause of political tension between Western and Islamic states, as a mutually desired resolution remains elusive. Many in the Middle East resent the partiality

shown Israel, as well as the undulating Western support of both moderate and autocratic Arab governments, depending on expedient interests instead of principled policies. A tremendous intercivilizational outcry followed the demeaning treatment and torture of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, rapidly deteriorating the soft power of the West's flagship delegation, the United States. As well, the indefinite imprisonment of Muslims at Guantánamo Bay and the growing Western imagination since September 11 of Muslim Arabs as irrationally zealous in their faith remain points of deep-seated resentment for many Muslims. And, with over 60 percent of the world's proved oil reserves located in the Middle East,<sup>57</sup> Muslims in the region anticipate, with growing indignation, a persistent Western intrusion for the foreseeable future.

Social anthropologist Stanley Kurtz has concluded that contemporary Islamic radicalism is a function of social and historical context, where traditional Muslim communities, rooted in kinship bonds and tribal arrangements, are struggling to "reconstitute" themselves within the realities of urbanization, migration, and a modern political economy.<sup>58</sup> This sociocultural, materialist interpretation points to social and political economic malaise in the Muslim world as root motivations behind the modern rise of Islamic resurgence and a century of festering resentment toward the West. As professor Talbi writes, "Faced with an over-developed West, Islam, which has barely emerged from the colonial era, now finds itself wholly in the zone of underdevelopment, with all the political, social, economic, and cultural consequences that this involves."<sup>59</sup>

From a materialist interpretation, then, a comprehensive understanding of contemporary Muslim worldviews can only come through a holistic assessment of the current social, political, and historical contexts in which Muslims are interpreting their faith and responding to circumstances. In a masterful retelling of his "tour of the Muslim world," taken for the purposes of greater understanding and rediscovering common ground, Islamic studies scholar Akbar Ahmed neatly encapsulates the complex sociopolitical setting of the contemporary Muslim world: "The failure of the world powers and the helplessness of Muslim leaders to solve the long-standing problems of the Palestinians, Kashmiris, Chechens, and now Iraqis, Afghans, and Lebanese, have further angered Muslims. Political developments over the past century have left millions of Muslims displaced from their homes, surrounded by despair and uncertainty. The stagnation and lack of moral leadership have only added to Muslim anger and frustration. . . . Most Muslims whom our team talked to felt dissatisfied with the state of affairs and desperately wanted change."<sup>60</sup> In a sociohistorical context of despondency and frustration, many Muslims long nostalgically



for past eras of Muslim preeminence, hoping a *return* to Islam will hasten a new age of prosperity and sociopolitical stability.<sup>61</sup>

As discussed earlier, sociopolitical exploitation is a key ingredient to the inimical feelings many Muslims have developed toward the more militarily powerful West, and a notable epiphenomenon of the real power differences between Islamic and Western worlds is an increase in terrorist activity. Political theorist Richard K. Betts posits that a gross imbalance of power is one of two recurring criteria underlying contemporary strategies of terrorism. Combined with political grievance (the other criterion), a significant imbalance in power is likely to create a “righteous indignation” sufficient for overwhelming “normal inhibitions against murderous tactics.” Abou El Fadl contends that radical Islamic groups like al-Qaeda are as much “anti-Western” as they are “pro-Islamic,”<sup>62</sup> exploiting this global power imbalance and clash of interests in an effort to garner greater Muslim support for their geostrategic aspirations and brutal strategies of indiscriminate violence.

In the twenty-first century geopolitical context, where the inferior conventional power configurations of the Islamic world have been deemed largely ineffective in deterring the dominant power structures of the West, terrorism is being remade by Islamic radicals into a merciless and calculated tactical alternative. Consequently, though indiscriminate violence against noncombatants must never find justification, in light of indefinite power imbalance between Western and Islamic powers, it seems that a solution to peace will come in locating and addressing the other motivating factor of contemporary terrorism: political grievances.<sup>63</sup>

\* \* \*

Ideology is another significant instigator of conflict, as traditional Islamic culture struggles to maintain the integrity of its essence against what Huntington calls “Westoxification.” Of course, modernization and Westernization are not synonymous. On the contrary, argues Huntington, modernization has been embraced by many communities within Islamic civilization. Nevertheless, through the processes and bi-products of globalization, the Western manifestation of modernization has become a borderless phenomenon of cultural dominance.<sup>64</sup> As one scholar puts it, Westernization “is at present the crucible of what is emerging as a universal culture.”<sup>65</sup> Consequently, throughout the Islamic world, modernization is actually promoting a counter-commitment to traditional culture that “almost necessarily assumes an anti-Western cast,” challenging Western culture either because of its corrupting secular influence or because of its missionizing agenda.<sup>66</sup>

Recoiling against the deleterious—some would argue superficial—symbols of Western civilization, many Muslim communities are endeavoring to retain or reclaim their cultural integrity. Media and modern communication technologies have served a central function in propagating culturally biased conceptions of modernism, emitting an almost instant barrage of Western ideas and images around the world. Modern media and “western” technologies require “no passport or visa” and can infiltrate the most insulated regions of the world to challenge traditional ways of life.<sup>67</sup> In *Jihad vs. McWorld*, Benjamin Barber shows how the West’s (McWorld’s) devouring mantra of individual consumerism and materialism is threatening the integrity of traditional cultures.<sup>68</sup> Bombarded with a steady diet of Coke, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Big Macs; *Baywatch*, *Friends*, and MTV; and blue jeans, Nikes, and iPods, many Muslim communities fear the degenerative and seductive influence secular materialism is having on younger generations and its long-term effect on the essence of traditional culture. Embittered traditional cultures (Jihad), argues Barber, “may grow out of and reflect (among other things) a pathological metastasis of valid grievances about the effects of arrogant secularist materialism that is the unfortunate concomitant of the spread of consumerism across the world.”<sup>69</sup>

The widely disputed processes of globalization have undoubtedly affected Muslim perceptions of the Other. Globalization has become a headless horseman of sorts, rapaciously integrating economies, societies, and cultures into an interdependent world system. Accelerating into the twenty-first century, globalization is effectively connecting the global village, reducing world poverty, increasing standards of living, and advancing civil rights through political and economic restructuring and development processes. However, opponents of globalization are quick to highlight its damaging side-effects, which include the exploitative realities of free trade, globalization’s preferential treatment of the corporate West, environmental degradation, and its excessive individualism. Undoubtedly, western-led processes of globalization are built upon the efficacy of free trade and the primacy of the individual—but this overt emphasis on the individual is viewed by many in the Muslim world as coming at the expense of the sacrosanct community. Akbar Ahmed effectively describes how the “‘me’ culture,” which “fuels the engine of globalization,” is creating harmful “pollutants” that are adversely affecting traditional societies: “By encouraging self-centeredness in the pursuit of economic goals and pleasure, it [globalization] destroys the capacity to empathize with others. Traditional societies, which are mainly community centered, see the world in a different light, viewing excessive concern with the self as both an aberration and a sign of social breakdown.”<sup>70</sup> Globalization, propagated through Western

capitalism and “excessive” individualism, is having an unfortunate effect on many Muslim communities and is certainly exacerbating the cultural insecurity of Muslim traditionalists and providing ample fodder for the rhetoric of Islamic extremists.

From this Muslim vantage point of sociopolitical exploitation, relentless consumerism, and policy double standards, comparative theorists might argue that a “clash of civilizations” theory actually provides Muslims a “recognition and, in some degree, legitimation for the distinctiveness of their own civilization and its independence from the West.”<sup>71</sup> Not only Muslim fundamentalists, but Muslim modernists as well, continue to seek answers to the challenges of modernity from within the treasury of Islamic tradition and scripture. As Islamic civilization confronts the powerful secular influence of the West, Muslims are struggling to protect the intrinsic place of religion and revelation. Notwithstanding “the obstacles that a powerful world living in the forgetfulness of God has placed before them,” most Muslims are striving to live according to the tenets of the Qur’anic message and the Traditions of the Prophet.<sup>72</sup>

### **Religious Freedom or Religious Responsibility?**

It is important to realize that ideas and values such as limited government, human dignity and equality, social pluralism, and religious freedom have a transcultural genealogy, with important roots in both Islamic and Western civilizations. Without difficulty one can locate such values within the historical, philosophical, and theological pedigrees of both cultures. The difficulty lies in the terms under which these cross-cultural values are interpreted and applied. For example, both Western and Islamic traditions claim a patent for the creation of human rights, and have imbued them with their own unique historical experiences, traditions, and beliefs. A brief look into the contemporary dispute concerning the universal or relative nature of one foundational human right—religious freedom—as reflected in the debate over Article 18 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), will help illustrate the important interpretive differences between civilizations and the complexity of cross-cultural dialogue.

After sixty years, Article 18 of the UDHR, which approbates the right of religious liberty for the individual person, continues to face criticism from many Muslim political and spiritual leaders and communities, who take exception to its universal claims. They argue that the conceptualization of Article 18 reflects a liberal Western construct that fails to appreciate the contextual differences and communal based interpretations of non-Western civilizations. The disputed Article 18 states, “Everyone has the

right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.” While post-Enlightenment and secular imaginations clearly undergird the framing of the UDHR and help to explain the individualist tones and broad swath of liberties rendered in Article 18, its Islamic antagonists argue that the Article’s limitless pledge for individual religious freedom fails to proffer a congruous recognition of nonliberal, communitarian interpretations of this universal freedom. Together, Professor of Islamic Studies Abdullah Saeed and Maldivian Attorney-General Hassan Saeed argue that, though some Muslims seek to show how the Qur’an and ways of the Prophet effectively support a universal understanding of human rights, there are many who resent Western inferences that the UDHR represents that universal understanding:

Muslims who oppose the universality of human rights argue that the UDHR and other similar human rights documents are a product of the secular West and therefore cannot be a basis for a Muslim understanding of human rights. For them, the UDHR is a “‘human construct’ and should not be privileged over . . . the rights and freedoms covered by the Divine Law. Some dismiss the UDHR as a relic of neo-colonialism while others argue that the United Nations, or any similar body, has no authority to legislate to Muslims . . . Islam has a particular concept of human rights, including religious freedom, and these must be understood in the context of the Islamic law, which itself determines the scope of freedom available to a Muslim.<sup>73</sup>

Proselytism and the freedom to change one’s religion epitomize two of the most disputed categories surrounding Article 18’s description of religious freedom. While proselytism is perceived from a Western perspective as a necessary corollary of religious freedom, many within the Islamic world view such behavior as an offensive, threatening, and unacceptable encroachment upon traditional Muslim communities, where the religious conscience of each person is deeply intertwined with the religiocultural essence of the community to which he or she is wholly allied. Jamil Baroodi, the Saudi delegate to the UN in 1948, expressly condemned the “right” to change one’s religion and the implied freedom of proselytism proposed in Article 18. He argued that the “freedom” to change one’s religion called for in the Declaration was of western derivation and thus carried no universal application.<sup>74</sup> Concerning Christian proselytism in the Muslim world, history has shown, Baroodi warned, that missionaries were in many cases simply “the forerunners of a political intervention, and there

were many instances where people had been drawn in to murderous conflict by the missionaries' efforts to convert them."<sup>75</sup> Hence, for many Muslims, the corollary Western "right" to proselytism—the freedom to change one's religion—is perceived as an unacceptable contradiction to true religious freedom.

What is more, many Muslims—both Sunni and Shi'i—are uncomfortable with the wording of Article 18, as liberty of conscience and freedom to exercise one's religion is approbated through Islamic scripture and the ways of the Prophet, but the liberty to apostatize from Islam is not as scripturally clear.<sup>76</sup> *Riddah*, or apostasy, remains a very controversial issue within the various Islamic communities and nation-states, since turning away from one's Muslim faith, according to Islamic law and tradition, can be a capital offense. Saudi Arabia's Basic Law of 1992 upholds the *shari'a* as the law of the state, outlawing apostasy and endorsing the government's role as enforcer of the majority's religious scruples. A de facto threat of punishment against apostates remains a reality in the Shi'i dominated state of Iran. In Sudan, the 1991 Criminal Act promulgates that apostasy from Islam carries a death sentence. And proselytism by non-Muslims is prohibited in a number of majority-Muslim countries, including Mauritania, Comoros, Morocco, Oman, and Malaysia. Apostasy is seen as blasphemy against Islam and a significant threat to the communal and cultural solidarity that Islam provides. Thus, attempts by Western Christians and secularists to convert Muslims or dilute their faith in the public square is often resented and forcefully rebuffed.<sup>77</sup>

Cultural insecurity is a borderless phenomenon. On many different levels, Western and Islamic cultures are colliding. While the contextual contingencies motivating the conflict may vary over time, this conflict between Western and Muslim civilizations has deep historical and, perhaps most significantly, religious roots. Although Western civilization continues to experience the collateral effects of three centuries of Enlightenment liberalism and secularization, the deeply embedded role of Christianity should not be discounted. In fact, it is the geographical, cultural, and imperial expressions of Christianity and Islam that have come into conflict most often over the past fourteen centuries.

### Crusade versus Jihad

What is today Western civilization was for centuries known simply as Christendom. From the seventh century, Islam and Christendom were concomitant civilizations vying for territory and converts. Both Christianity and Islam declare a universal mandate purporting the final

truth for all of humanity. Both trace their religious heritage to the Middle East region and claim territorial entitlement of the “Holy Land,” for it is there that scripture was revealed and religious experiences found expression.<sup>78</sup> Princeton’s Bernard Lewis aptly encapsulates this historical collision: “Though Christendom and Islam were rivals, indeed, competitors, for the role of world religion, and though both shared so many traditions and beliefs, so many purposes and aspirations, neither was willing to recognize the other as a viable alternative . . . Of the civilizations that were neighbors of Islam, Christianity alone was, in principle, universal—in belief, in self-perception, in intention.”<sup>79</sup>

Islam and the West share many heritages and influences: origins in the Middle East, an Abrahamic theology, prophetic revelation, divine kingship, Greek philosophy, Roman law, imperialism, and religious nationalism.<sup>80</sup> Yet, their geohistorical interactions were often characterized with either general animosity or expedient utility. French Orientalist Simon Jargy concluded, “To try to analyze the historical relations between Islam and Christianity, in both their religious and sociopolitical components, is to come up immediately against one preliminary fact: although the three great religions of the monotheist faith came from the same roots, they developed separately from each other. They have not supplemented but rather opposed each other in perpetual conflict.”<sup>81</sup>

Muhammad Talbi laments how, throughout history, both sides of this precarious relationship have been the “unconscious victims of caricatures” by the other.<sup>82</sup> Historically, neither Christendom nor Islam were monolithic, but ethnically, politically, and linguistically diverse. Each struggled continuously with many internal divisions, local aspirations, and regional rivalries. Nonetheless, through numerous periods of conquest and reconquest across the centuries, Christendom and Islam generally perceived one another singularly, as two empires and two religions competing for the fealty of the world. Indeed, Christendom and Islam were “old acquaintances, intimate enemies,” writes Lewis, “whose continuing conflict derived a special virulence from their shared origins and common aims.”<sup>83</sup>

Although Christianity has been argued into irrelevance in much of Western Europe and continues to confront the challenges of secularism in the United States, it is experiencing explosive growth across the Southern Hemisphere. Despite Christianity’s reduced role in the West, its deeply embedded influence throughout Western history causes many Westerners to consciously and subconsciously sympathize and support non-Western Christian communities.

Like Christianity, Islam is also experiencing explosive growth across much of the developing world.<sup>84</sup> The tension between Christianity and

Islam has been the alchemy shaping much of the violent conflict in the twenty-first century. While ethnic, cultural, political, and geographical variables may play a significant role in national and transnational conflicts, when a community's "ultimate concern" is called on to legitimize hostilities, violence escalates. And, as history continues to demonstrate, religion has a way of escalating and protracting conflicts and increasing their brutality.<sup>85</sup> Religious tension is especially magnified within those states or regions where either Muslims or Christians comprise a majority of the population with the Other constituting a significant minority. Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Indonesia, Sudan, the Balkans, and the Philippines are such examples where religious tension between sizeable Christian and Muslim communities has instigated or inflamed conflict.<sup>86</sup>

What is more, though Western civilization has experienced significant secularization in its policies and ideologies over the past two centuries, many Muslims today still view Western politics, philosophies, and policies as inherently Christian. Seyyed Nasr asserts that "traditional Muslims always saw other people in terms of their attachment . . . to a religious community." This explains why many Muslims today "see Westerners as Christians and cannot even understand the category of secularism and the fact that many Westerners are . . . no longer attached to the Christian world view."<sup>87</sup> For some, the conflict is still between Islam and Christendom—one of crusade and *jihad*. Muslims are not alone, as many within Western culture also perceive religion as the primary difference and danger of the Other. Mohammed Arkoun, Emeritus Professor of the History of Islamic Thought at the Sorbonne, laments how the "heterogeneous complexes" of Christianity and Islam still conjure "up powerful imagery" and "negative connotations" of the Other.<sup>88</sup> Adding complexity to this cross-cultural collision, "mental constructions," states Arkoun, place the conflict not only between two civilizations, but between two opposing worldviews:

Islam" and "the West" have ceased to refer to their objective contents, whether religious, cultural, intellectual, or historical; from now on they function as powerful conglomerates of images, or prejudices, or projections, which call for two grids of mutual perception, two systems for legitimating all enterprises, exclusion, and combat on both sides. The "Westerners" make full use of these ideological conglomerates to justify the policy of controlling and rejecting Muslim immigrants; the "Muslims" legitimate their struggle, even sacralizing it, by identifying imperialism, the missionary movement, and Judeo-Christianity as the destructive wills which have been directed against the truth of Islam since its emergence.<sup>89</sup>

Philip Jenkins surmises that for the twenty-first century, religion is and will continue to be a foundational explanation for much of the political violence

and many of the interminable civil wars around the world. And, in most situations,” he continues, “the critical division” will continue to be “the age-old battle between Christianity and Islam.”<sup>90</sup>

In September of 2006, Pope Benedict XVI, in a lecture he gave at the University of Regensburg, cited the caustic words of a fourteenth-century Byzantine emperor (Manuel II Paleologus), who indicted Islam for its affinity toward violent conversion. Widespread Muslim indignation followed the inflammatory remarks.<sup>91</sup> When one reviews the lecture in its entirety, it is clear the Pope was hoping to intellectually traverse the ostensive chasm between doctrinaire religion and the sanctity of reason. Though the overarching purpose of his lecture is quite evident, why he chose Islam to illustrate the contradistinction between violence and the nature of God is not as clear. After all, Christian history has not been exculpated of such violent coercion. For many Muslims, the pontiff’s calculated reference to a dogmatic Islam only reinforces the notion of clashing cultures and the cosmic battle of good versus evil. And outside the religious realm, in the temporal forum of foreign policy and international diplomacy, security analysts are scratching their heads, wondering “why the pope chose to throw a hand grenade into a powder keg, and why he chose to do it at this moment in history.”<sup>92</sup>

The apologetic character of the contemporary marketplace of global religions, the vocal influence of Christian Zionism on American foreign policy in the Israel-Palestine question, the close historical association between Christian missionaries and Western imperialism, and the overt individual and faith-based prejudices experienced by Muslim minorities living in the West are just a few examples of why some Muslims choose to view the current conflict as a cosmic battle between Islam and Christianity, good and evil. Concurrently, the accelerating terrorist activity in the West by Islamic radicals—who justify their indiscriminate brutality with Islamic language and religious imagery—and the widely-publicized, religiously sanctioned human rights abuses recurring in the Muslim world, have influenced Western imaginings of the contemporary clash as one of civilized, enlightened truth versus fanatical, dehumanizing religion.

In any case, the geohistorical arrangements between these two siblings have always been precarious, and the contemporary relationship is no different, remaining, for many, a zero-sum game, where security and salvation are at stake. From this uncompromising religiocultural perspective, lasting coexistence appears unlikely; for, in the words of former U.S. Secretary of State, and a historian himself, Henry Kissinger, “When truths collide, compromise becomes the first casualty.”



### Conceiving Coexistence: A Strategy of Tolerance

A collision is occurring on many levels between Islam and the West. This, however, does not mean that cross-cultural conflict is unavoidable or that coexistence is unattainable. Coexistence has and can again occur between these two world cultures. In Seyyed Nasr's words, "The future of the world in the next few years and decades will depend obviously on how various world views and civilizations will be able to live together."<sup>93</sup> In spite of the universal aspirations of both Western and Islamic civilizations, history and current experience indicate that, in reality, the future of our world does depend on the pragmatic ability of Western and Islamic civilizations to live peacefully together—that is, coexist.

As put forth in the introduction, there are a variety of ways to define coexistence, from a simple inclination to live at peace with others despite differences to a more complex recipe of individual commitments and group policies that facilitate proactive dialogue and a nonviolent engagement. Despite the subtle nuances of its various definitions, coexistence, in general, carries with it a necessary tension—a tension that must be repeatedly tempered through an attitude of humility, a spirit of benevolence, and a nonviolent recognition of the Other. At its core, sustainable coexistence has three central preconditions.

A vision of coexistence first requires a universal willingness among groups to live at peace. For peace to be achieved and maintained, it must first be desired. "Islam and the West find themselves equally in the same crisis," writes professor Talbi; thus, "we have no choice except to agree to good neighborliness in the interest of all, insofar as possible."<sup>94</sup> Emory professor Abdullahi An-Na'im is correct when he states that what is undermining a consensus toward peace, within and across cultures, is not the power in difference, but the difference in power.<sup>95</sup> In a world of competing nation-states and undulating alliances, reconciling the practical *balance of power* policies of *realpolitik* with the more principled communitarian and cosmopolitan concerns will require continuous dialogue and compromise from actors at all levels, from grass-root activists to international institutions. From a pragmatic, political vantage point, this means that Western and Muslim states must constantly reassess their political and economic policies from the perspective of peace, prefer open diplomacy and benevolent engagement (with all countries), and struggle to balance important territorial and security interests with the long-term, ethics-based agendas of peace and mutual trust. In spite of differences in temporal power, a willingness to live in peace must be a rudimentary motivation at every level if coexistence is to be realized and sustained.

Second, beyond this basic willingness to live peacefully with others, if it is to persist, coexistence must also include a high valuation of the Other as an equal member of humanity, worthy of dignity and respect. An affirming image of “otherness” is essential for a greater awareness of oneself and “for the welfare of the whole of humanity.”<sup>96</sup> Truly, it is when a community genuinely labors to understand the Other that it develops a clearer understanding of itself and the human condition *in toto*. Muhammad Talbi is right: when conceiving coexistence between Islam and the West, “there can be no exchange when there is no reciprocal esteem.”<sup>97</sup> One of the most effective ways in which to remove barriers to coexistence is through a non-violent and affable engagement with the Other—respecting the Other, even when offensive differences abound.

Finally, if a meaningful coexistence between Western and Islamic civilizations is to be realized and sustained, it must be grounded and developed through cross-cultural, interfaith values. Despite important civilizational differences, a broad array of transcultural values must be located if the path toward coexistence is to be safely traversed.

Can a common heritage of values be found to restore coexistence between Islam and the West? Indeed, there is no vacuity of corresponding moral perceptions and traditions between Islamic and Western cultures. Ignorance of and isolation from the Other only exacerbates animosity and increases potential for conflict. For coexistence to occur, “we must prefer crossroads to blind alleys.” That is, instead of incessantly revisiting the history of tension and conflict between Islam and the West, both civilizations must rediscover their many “convergences.”<sup>98</sup> As they have done sporadically in the past, Western and Islamic cultures can learn from the experiences and ideas of the Other. If Western (secular and Christian) and Muslim communities are to achieve coexistence, their only viable option is to probe together their theologies, philosophies, and histories for a common heritage of values and principles for living together. Coexistence will require a persistent and thoroughgoing investigation into the unique and borderless ideas that reflect the peaceable essence of Islamic and Western cultures.<sup>99</sup>

One such cross-cultural concept, pivotal to this project and absolutely essential to achieving coexistence between Islam and the west, is tolerance. Coexistence demands a cross-cultural commitment to tolerance. Coexistence depends, in large part, on how effectively the attitude of tolerance, within both cultures, challenges and overcomes the dominating anti-theoretical attitude of intolerance. For this reason, a strategic, cross-cultural attitude of tolerance toward the Other must be envisaged that permeates all levels of society, from local to global engagements. This commitment to tolerance includes learning how to disagree without resorting to violence,

developing postures of forbearance and mutual respect, and willingness to proactively engage. Realizing that, coexistence involves addressing the meaning and limits of tolerance according to both Islamic and Western cultures. To retain the integrity of one's identity without denying the integrity in others remains a fundamental requisite for coexistence—reciprocal esteem as human beings is mandatory. Thus, the conception and application of tolerance become a fundamental and effective strategy for achieving a lasting peace between communities.

Tolerance is neither inherently Western nor inherently Islamic. Rather, it is intrinsically human. It is a concept that finds deep meaning within the rich sources and traditions of both Western and Islamic histories. As indicated previously, both traditions approach tolerance from their own contextually contingent perspectives. Both would do well to reexamine the worthy concept of tolerance and its ability to facilitate lasting coexistence. The cross-cultural confluence of interpretations of tolerance can only deepen the discourse on coexistence.

The ensuing four chapters examine consonant, as well as diverging, historical, philosophical, and theological accounts of tolerance within first Western and then Islamic traditions. The many diverging paths to tolerance evinced within and beyond these civilizations will highlight the complexity of this idea and the effect that geopolitical, social, and religious realities have upon people and cultures. As stated in the introduction, there is no one universally accepted, systematic conception of tolerance, consistently understood and applied by all cultures at all times. Moreover, there are many different forms and frameworks of tolerance—theological, theoretical, cultural or customary, and political—within Islamic and Western civilizations, which are a manifestation of local, state, and regional peculiarities. However, as shown in chapter seven, beyond the different genealogies of tolerance, the various historical and ideological conceptualizations within Islamic and Western cultures rooted in a number of foundational, recurring principles that give credence to a sustainable and mutually endorsed strategy of tolerance that not only facilitates lasting rapprochement but also enables the expression of other transcultural and interfaith values such as *caritas*, humility, liberty, justice, and human dignity.

If Huntington is right that, at the broadest level, civilizations “unite and divide mankind,” then “in a world of different civilizations,” Islamic and Western cultures “will have to learn to coexist with the other.” It is hoped that locating and embracing a cross-cultural strategy of tolerance will affect such an achievement.

## A Historical Glimpse of Tolerance in the West

In the eyes of history, religious toleration is the highest evidence of culture in a people

—*Marmaduke Pickthall*

King Utopus . . . made a decree that it should be lawful for every man to follow what religion he would, and that he might do the best he could to bring other to his opinion, so that he did it peaceably, gently, quietly and soberly . . . yet he should use no kind of violence, and refrain from displeasing and seditious words

—*Thomas More*

Whether religious, linguistic, political, or cultural, difference is not a recent phenomenon of Western civilization. In fact, a persistent characteristic of the Occident has been diversity. The strategic and often violent interactions between Rome and the Germanic tribes of the European continent in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries; the enclosing proximity of an imposing Islamic civilization beginning in the seventh century; the capricious coexistence of Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Spain and the Mediterranean from the eighth to fifteenth century, as well as the synchronous brutality and intolerance that resulted from numerous wars between Christian and Muslim kingdoms on the Iberian Peninsula; the potent lure of transcultural commerce across the Mediterranean and Maghreb; the fall of Constantinople (1453) and the incessant geopolitical threat of the powerful Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries; and the West's distressing conquests in the sixteenth century of the indigenous peoples of the New World are only a few of the many Western encounters with the religious and cultural Other. And it was from various historical encounters with otherness that theories and policies of tolerance, as well as intolerance, were conceived.

Indeed, tolerance is a labyrinthine concept not easily encapsulated. While the origin of its Western pedigree is disputed by intellectual, as well as social and political historians, contrary to a contemporary misconception, tolerance was not birthed in the Age of Reason. Neither was tolerance a novelty of the Enlightenment. This traditional argument—that seeds of tolerance were first planted in a discordant sixteenth century, expanded in response to the religiously and politically tumultuous seventeenth century (after its wars of religion were fought to exhaustion), nurtured in the writings of the eighteenth-century philosophes, and blossomed to maturity through nineteenth- and twentieth-century liberalism and secularization—is ill conceived. On the contrary, all through Western history (and non-Western history) one can locate people who were writing about tolerance and related themes or benefiting from its practice. What is more, in the history of tolerance, context mattered, as social, political, and geographic variables affected local human experience. Modern ideas of tolerance are not the result of the “end of history” or the pinnacle of human progress. In fact, more often than not, early modern conceptualizations of tolerance were simply intellectual and pragmatic reactions to unique sixteenth- and seventeenth-century experiences with religious and political conflict.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to a number of individually produced writings, Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen have collaborated to produce two edited works that offer a critical reexamination of the historical and geographical breadth and complexity of tolerance, presenting a critical examination and refutation of the mainstream post-Reformation hypothesis for tolerance.<sup>2</sup> They suggest that once tolerance is disentangled “from its Lockean and Enlightenment roots,” it becomes clear how conceptualizations of tolerance were “in circulation long before the late seventeenth century and were found among disparate and even directly opposed conceptual frameworks.” Instead of a singular linear narrative, the Western chronicle of tolerance is “a tale of many divergent and potentially conflicting visions.”<sup>3</sup> Not only do these pivotal works challenge the historical specificity of tolerance, but they also show how the liberal political framework of tolerance, based upon abstract individuality, is only one of many parallel and even deviating paths to tolerance.

Late medieval and Reformation scholar Heiko Oberman argued that the history of tolerance “is one of the last preserves still firmly in the grasp of intellectual historians.”<sup>4</sup> Oberman and other scholars of social history have sought to reorient the debate on tolerance from intellectual history to the social history of ideas, not to discount intellectual history but, rather, to enrich and, perhaps, emend the traditional epic of tolerance.<sup>5</sup> To procure a

balanced understanding of tolerance in Western and Islamic civilizations, one must not only investigate how tolerance has been conceived but also the realities that influenced such conceptions. Tolerance was and remains susceptible to *socialization*—the boundaries for writing and applying tolerance have depended heavily on historical context and the effects of sociopolitical and economic circumstances. Thinkers and practitioners of tolerance (as well as intolerance), past and present, are products of their age—hopefully learning from experiences in the past as they respond to the unique circumstances of the present.

Nederman and Laursen have indicated that a central purpose to their collaborative scholarship was to “encourage readers to expand their horizons in thinking about” the historical roots and conceptual dilemmas surrounding the attitudes and practices of tolerance.<sup>6</sup> In that respect, their work is indeed a success, for a central portion of this chapter is devoted to investigating the pragmatic and principled existence of tolerance in the West well before the seventeenth century, focusing on the context and ideas of select thinkers who advocated tolerance of the Other. Instead of suggesting a systematic progress of tolerance along a simple continuum of Western history, this chapter reinforces the contrary argument that Western tolerance—in theory and practice—was neither an end-product of historical human progress nor confined to a modern-liberal association. Rather, tolerance was contextually contingent; its sociopolitical practice and ideological defense were inconstant phenomena diversely defended throughout Western history.

A terse rendering of tolerance as an evolving pattern of development, culminating in the liberal ideal, discounts the earliest experiences and theories that help comprise the West’s complex historical record of tolerance. At the same time, however, this chapter cannot attempt to map the complete, sequential history of events and ideas of tolerance in the West. Thus, omitting a number of significant Western theorists and practitioners of tolerance, a brief examination of the inconsonant and consonant convictions of some of the West’s earlier proponents will sufficiently demonstrate how the profundity of past concepts of tolerance still have meaningful application to today’s timeless goals of interreligious dialogue, mutual respect, and cross-cultural coexistence.

### **Tolerance and the Transcendancy of Religion**

When discussing the place of tolerance in Western civilization, the context of religion is unavoidable. There is little debate that for much of human history conceptualizations of tolerance were interwoven with religion.<sup>7</sup>

Tolerance, of course, finds its expression through adversity and its motivation from intolerance and persecution, all of which were chronic historical occurrences in the overlapping realms of religion, politics, and society. Nederman and Laursen are right: "Religion, and specifically Christianity, created the most significant . . . disputes in the European world from the time of the Roman empire."<sup>8</sup> In Christendom, talk of tolerance inferred religious tolerance. As stated in chapter one, no more than four centuries ago, Western civilization was coextensive with Christendom. The West was a world civilization that developed its identity from within the world of Christianity. Indeed, Western civilization was seen by most Westerners, since the ninth century at least, as a genuine attempt to provide temporal expression to God's final truth.

Following the demise of the Empire in Rome, relations between Church and State were never surefooted and often depended on a particular state's willingness or need to cooperate or coalesce with the Church for reasons of political legitimacy and stability. When circumstances permitted, of course, the State preferred a caesaro-papist arrangement—where the Church, also for reasons of expediency, quietly deferred temporal sovereignty to the State. Despite this temperamental relationship, the Church was a ubiquitous reality in the West, permeating the village landscape as well as the royal courts. Bernard Hamilton, emeritus professor of medieval history at the University of Nottingham, writes that the Church was a formidable institution in the medieval period "not because the majority of its lay members were, in the modern sense, fervent Catholics," but because its ecclesiastical hierarchy and laws "pervaded all society at all levels in a way which has no parallel anywhere in the western world today." There were a variety of kingdoms but all under the auspices of one Church;<sup>9</sup> and for much of Western history, Christianity furnished Christendom a persistent and profound metaphysical and philosophical source for justifying, as well as vitiating, tolerance within secular society.

It is often through experiences of intolerance that intellectual and practical arguments for tolerance emerge. It is this necessary duality—intolerance spawning tolerance—that consumes much of this project. In the minds of most Western and non-Western scholars today, intolerance has played a more notable role than its converse. The Donatist persecution in the early fifth century; the medieval suppression of the Cathar and Waldenisan heresies; the medieval, Spanish, and Roman inquisitions; the excommunication and burning of the Bohemian dissident, Jan Huss (d. 1415); the commensurate fate in the next century of the Spanish theologian Michael Servetus in Calvin's Geneva (1553); sixteenth-century England's ecumenical stake, which accepted Protestants and Catholics

without discrimination; and the brutal wars of religion in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe are often adduced as some of the more prominent historical markers of religiopolitical intolerance in the West. Such examples, however, deal directly with the religious dissenters—that is, the heretic. Of even greater importance for this project of cross-cultural coexistence is the tolerance and intolerance shown to those non-Christian communities within and beyond Western Civilization. The proximity of the Other within and beyond the Occident necessitated a variety of interactions: intellectual, economic, militaristic, and, of course, religious.

The degree of tolerance afforded the pagan or non-Christian was incommensurable with that shown the heretic. Theological, philosophical, economic, and, most conspicuously, geopolitical considerations affected the variation of coexistence and conflict between believers and unbelievers. Interreligious contact and conflict led to a proliferation of writings on tolerance (and intolerance), as well as a wide variety of pragmatic policies of coexistence.

This chapter proffers a brief examination of four important theorists of interreligious tolerance: the Patristic rhetorician, Lactantius; the medieval theorist, Ramon Llull; and the sixteenth-century proponents, Bartolomé de Las Casas and Jean Bodin. These diverse thinkers each effused a spirit of intellectual humility and forbearance, and the resoluteness and incisiveness in their then controversial apologias of tolerance is ineluctable. The rhetorician, theologian, and philosophers examined in this chapter reflect their geohistorical context, deliberating on their unique circumstances and cognitive experiences with the Other through the timeless value of tolerance. This exposition will hopefully contribute to contemporary efforts to disinter the existence and varieties of tolerance throughout Western history, thereby providing additional stimuli and insight for framing a meaningful theory of cross-cultural, interfaith tolerance today.

### **A Fourth-Century Plea for Tolerance**

In its first three centuries, the burgeoning Christian community was a fairly homogenous voice of tolerance. The Beatitudes of Jesus promise blessings to the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, and the poor in spirit. Jesus taught through words and example the importance of loving others, even one's enemies. Embodying this radical pacifism, for instance, was the Father of Latin Christianity, Tertullian, who refused to sanction revenge as an acceptable recourse for his fellow Christians suffering personal violence and malediction in the early third-century Roman empire. Instead, he reminded them of the Lord's monition to "turn the other cheek." This



Christian rhetorician, in light of Jesus' teachings (and the political and cultural circumstances of his day, no doubt), saw no distinction between those who initiated violence and those who chose to requite: "What difference is there between *provoker* and *provoked*, except that the former is detected as prior in evil-doing, but the latter as posterior? Yet each stands impeached of hurting a man in the eye of the Lord . . . In evil doing there is no account taken of *order*, nor does *place* separate what *similarity* conjoins."<sup>10</sup>

This was the predominant perspective of the early Christian community: a person who suffered verbal or personal injury was to forgo the lust for revenge in favor of the higher merits of forbearance and forgiveness. Not unlike Buddhist teachings, members of the early Christian community reminded each other that violence only beget more violence. "How oft," asked Tertullian, "has its [revenge's] vehemence been found worse than the cause which led to it?"

Another noteworthy teaching of the expanding Christian sect was on the sacrosanct nature of human volition. That salvation was freely given and must be freely accepted and acted upon is a recurring theme of the Christian scriptures. In the Christian Gospels, Jesus offered humankind a choice, one that must be made freely and openly. Tertullian, in an open letter to the Proconsul of Africa, Scapula, states that "it is a fundamental right, a privilege of nature that every man should worship according to his own convictions: one man's religion neither harms nor helps another man." For it is not correct, he continued, "to compel religion—to which free-will and not force should lead us."<sup>11</sup> This early doctrine of religious tolerance was again espoused in the fourth century through such Doctors of the Church as Hilary of Poitiers, who cautioned the Arian emperor Constantius II against officially endorsed coercion: "God does not want unwilling worship, nor does he require a forced repentance."

Context undoubtedly influenced Christian calls for tolerance in the early centuries, because persecution was a common occurrence. In contrast, from the perspective of secular authorities of an attenuating Roman Empire, Christian adherents had a propensity toward being intolerant of the imperial ideal. Thus, as Christianity continued to spread and its adherents generally refused the rituals of Rome and the validity of the imperial cult, the insecurity of the sovereign would escalate, in fits and starts, into violent—often deadly—condemnation of this rising sect. Here one sees an irony of history: for it was Christianity's monotheistic claims to absolute truth and salvation through the one true God and the consequential damnation of those outside the Church—which for three centuries was a latent threat to secular authorities—that would soon be an impetus for the convenient marriage between Church and State.

In a number of ways, the fourth century set the official course for Western civilization. The State's tolerance and then official embrace of Christianity during this period is critical to the history of Western civilization. The fourth century inaugurated what would become a restless merger between the rudimentary components of Western civilization—namely, Greek philosophy, Roman law, and Christianity.<sup>12</sup> It witnessed the seeding of a Christian Empire. On his death-bed, Emperor Galerius issued an edict of tolerance (311), declaring an official forbearance of Christians.<sup>13</sup> Two years later, Constantine, along with his co-emperor Licinius,<sup>14</sup> expanded the protection of Christians in the famous Edict of Milan (313) by restoring state-confiscated property. Paganism was still officially tolerated (even encouraged) but no longer the official religion of Rome. Unity of the Roman Empire—not religious freedom—was the important thing; thus, all peaceable religions were tolerated. Tolerance was countenanced to secure public order and the hopes of divine favor—not for the sake of human liberty or equality. At the end of the century, however, this exceptional degree of tolerance was discontinued as Christianity was approbated as the official religion of the empire, and more oppressive measures were promptly instituted against the unbeliever. By the dawn of the fifth century, a quid pro quo between Christian and secular authorities was begun, and the faithful, once put to the sword, now wielded its fury.

In spite of, or perhaps due to, the religious and political disarray of the period, the fourth century played an influential part in the development of tolerance in the West. During this period of civilizational formation for the West, the Christian apologist and teacher of Latin rhetoric, Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius (d. 325), presented an eloquent defense of tolerance still referenced by Western theorists and theologians. The *Divine Institutes* (written between 303 and 311) was a Latin apologetic disquisition consisting of seven books that juxtaposed the rationality and inherent truth of the Christian faith with the profane inferiorities of paganism. Responding to the religious intolerance of the early fourth century, Lactantius lamented that religion was polluted and outraged by those who defended it with bloodshed, torture, and evil, ignoring authentic religion's requisite of freedom: "There is nothing that is so much a matter of willingness as religion."<sup>15</sup> He argued that God cannot love a worshiper who does not love him, and true adoration cannot be compelled. He writes, "An unwilling sacrifice is no sacrifice. Unless it comes from the heart spontaneously, it is blasphemy when people act under threat of proscription, injustice, prison or torture . . . We [Christians] by contrast make no demand that our God . . . be worshiped by anyone unwillingly, and we do not get cross if he is not worshiped."<sup>16</sup>

Tolerance of the free will of others was a consequence of authentic Christianity. Faith must be approached by each individual voluntarily, trusting in God's power to avenge those who hold him in contempt. If God does not want an "unwilling sacrifice," then tolerance must be afforded to those who believe in other gods. "Worship cannot be forced," warned Lactantius, "it is something to be achieved by talk rather than blows, so that there is free will in it."<sup>17</sup> Persuasion and argumentation, motivated by a love of God and his creation, are the methods available to the Christian. Retaliation, arrogance, and absolute intolerance, on the other hand, are condemned under the judgment of God.<sup>18</sup> Thus, tolerance becomes a necessary strategy for ensuring the divinely ordained liberty of conscience: True worship calls for "the maximum of devotion and loyalty. How will God love a worshipper if the worshipper doesn't love him?"<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, Lactantius remarked how authentic religion is upheld not through violence but through endurance. Lactantius ascribed virtue to endurance, defining it as "the bearing with equanimity of ills whether imposed or accidental."<sup>20</sup> "Let us sustain the difficulties of this life," he wrote, "and endure them by helping each other."<sup>21</sup> For Lactantius, endurance was a consequence of suffering adversity, and those in prosperity (outside of adversity) often lack this important virtue. But a just and wise person who has suffered adversity was imbued with the virtue of endurance.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the virtue of patience existed in tandem with endurance. Lactantius asserted, "There is no truer virtue than patience," which has the potency to extinguish the flames of evil and bloodshed. It is, of course, the nature of patience that it cannot be demonstrated until confronted with insult or provoked by injury. He described patience as the fortitude of restraint or self-control: it "recalls a troubled and wobbling soul to its calm, it soothes it, and restores man to himself."<sup>23</sup>

Lactantius's teachings on patience echoed the advice given by his third-century predecessor, Tertullian, who wrote in a very different era of persecution. Similar to Lactantius, Tertullian describes evil as the "impatience of good." "Let outrageousness be wearied out by your patience," he counsels to those suffering the insanities of injustice. Following Jesus's instruction to "judge not, lest you be judged," Tertullian argues that refraining from the judgment of another is only possible for one who is "patient in not revenging himself."<sup>24</sup> For both men, patience and endurance epitomized the virtuous. Tolerance has been defined as the means for *enduring* with *patience* hardship or persecution.<sup>25</sup> And for Lactantius, as well as his progenitor Tertullian, it was this enduring patience or tolerance that characterized practical wisdom, suggesting a calculated composure or reasoned calmness in the thick of unfavorable circumstances or offensive behavior.

It is the nature of “a wise and excellent man,” Lactantius reasoned, “to want to be rid not of his adversary (which is impossible without risk of doing wrong) but of the quarrel itself, which can be done usefully and justly.”<sup>26</sup> Here we see that a just and wise person wishes to disembarass himself not from his antagonists in a quarrel but from the quarrel itself; and it is reasoned discussion, coupled with the supreme virtues of patience and endurance, that will dissolve quarrels and affect goodwill and *caritas* toward the Other. Tolerance, then, enables the wise to cultivate the important virtues of patience and endurance for the purpose of ending conflict.

Lactantius believed in a Divine governance of the world and that God, in the end, would have justice. Important virtues such as endurance, patience, and forgiveness are a product of this temporal world of adversity and plurality. Because God would have us cultivate “the perpetuity of virtue,” difference and confrontation become necessary conditions for this “time-bound” world. The ultimate reward for a life of virtue (via tolerance) comes not in this life but only through death: “Death does not extinguish a man,” he wrote, “it escorts him to the reward of his virtue.”<sup>27</sup>

One may wonder how the religiopolitical context of the third and fourth centuries affected Lactantius’s interpretations and teachings on tolerance, from the violent persecutions of Christians by Diocletian and Gelarius, to the positive tolerance afforded Christians through Constantine’s Edict of Milan. Lactantius was not writing as a champion of religious freedom for the pagan. Indeed, a persistent purpose behind much of his work was to excoriate the persecutory nature of the Roman state and its intolerant paganism.<sup>28</sup> From experience and providence, Lactantius did, however, advocate a religiously tolerant society based on human freedom and virtuousness. He endeavored to uplift the tolerant and benevolent nature of Christianity as a way to chastise imperial persecution of Christians and dissuade authorities from policies of intolerance.

Making converts was essential for Lactantius but only through reasoned dialogue, gentle persuasion, and a virtuous life. Following Constantine’s Edict of Milan, Lactantius did not urge reciprocation of persecution toward non-Christians. On the contrary, he portrayed this period of religious diversity and tolerance as a “clear sky with longed-for light.” This, of course, is not to suggest that Lactantius would have embraced modernity’s understanding of religious multiplicity, state neutrality, or secular indifference toward religion—he would have supported none of these.<sup>29</sup> Yet, following the imperial declaration in Milan to tolerate all peaceable religions, he does celebrate the “tranquility . . . restored throughout the world” and how a “joyous and serene peace rejoices the hearts of all men.”<sup>30</sup> This Roman historian and Christian moralist helped to cultivate a vocabulary

for tolerance in Western civilization that has been condoned and condemned by popes, princes, and philosophers across the centuries. Pragmatism and power often determined how future leaders and thinkers would appropriate, expand, or neglect Lactantius's discourse on tolerance.

Perhaps a contemporary application is useful at this point. Interstate relations have always been governed by an amoral realism focused on power and security—sometimes imbued with a consequentialist ethic. As such, the uncompromising *caritas* called for by Lactantius remains an unlikelihood between nations. Nonetheless, despite its doubtful appropriation by the State, Lactantius's simplistic, yet wise idea of enduring patience has real, meaningful potential for affecting coexistence in the twenty-first century between individuals and communities across the local and global villages. To citizens of Muslim and Western worlds decrying the injustices foisted on them by the Other, Lactantius disinters how an enduring patience can help extirpate conflict:

Where do quarrels between people come from, and how do their fights and squabbles arise, except that when impatience encounters crooked dealings [injustice] it often stirs up big storms? [However] if you match dishonesty [injustice] with patience . . . the evil will be put out there and then, like putting water on a fire. But if dishonesty [injustice] in all its provocativeness gets impatience as its mate, then it will flare up as if drenched in oil, and no river at all will extinguish the blaze, but only bloodshed . . . So what is the difference between a wise man and good man on the one hand and evil and stupid people on the other, except that he has an invincible patience which fools lack? He knows how to control and reduce his own anger, while they, for lack of virtue, cannot control theirs.<sup>31</sup>

In our contemporary context, if violent injustices across cultures are impatiently reciprocated *ad infinitum*, conflict will continue to intensify and coexistence will remain elusive. For this reason, an enduring patience or tolerance, as well as a desire for peace, remain essential ingredients in the difficult recipe for amity between Islam and the West.

### **Tolerance and the Medieval Epoch**

At best, tolerance was an inconstant phenomenon of Western history. Its temperamental existence is a testament to the efficacy of context. With the ill-fated Roman Empire relocated to the Bosphorus, the West remained fraught with geopolitical division and fragile, unpredictable alliances. In the sixth century, with Gaul conquered by the Franks, England under the control of the Angles and Saxons, Spain in the hands of the Visigoths, and

Italy under constant threat from the Teutonic Lombards, the pope and the Church asserted even greater temporal authority, proffering Christianity as the sole source of unity. By the late eighth century, Byzantium was forsaken, and the Bishop of Rome had cast his lot with the Carolingian dynasty.<sup>32</sup>

Historian Brian Tierney recounts how Western civilization was politically fragmented through the medieval period. It was an age of unstable relationships between popes and monarchs, inhibiting the realization of “a medieval Christian empire”; and Christendom was fractured further by the burgeoning “national monarchies” in England and France. Under these geohistorical conditions, Christianity remained the “only bond of unity.”<sup>33</sup>

While Christianity was the official religion of Western civilization from the fourth through fifteenth centuries, ritual and doctrinal conformity were never absolute. In particular, the medieval worldview should not be compartmentalized as a monolithic era, as popular religiosity and speculative theology were complex parts of this diverse epoch.<sup>34</sup> Yet, scholar of medieval history Bernard Hamilton emphasizes how a “minimum of conformity” to the Church characterized the medieval era. He writes, “Although the average level of religious practice was low and religious doubt was widespread, these facts were not considered incompatible with membership of the Church, as nowadays they tend to be. Everybody in western Europe who was not a Muslim or a Jew was baptized at birth and received a Catholic funeral when he died.”<sup>35</sup> The manner of individual and communal involvement in the rituals of the Church was multifarious. Still, although some scrupulously adhered to religious ritual, while others never “set foot in a church,” complete rejection of the Church was “almost unheard of.”<sup>36</sup> The Church provided answers for the mundane questions of life, as well as the difficult questions of death—it explained the reasons for suffering and provided the liturgies to salvation. The Catholic Church was a system of faith and values, as well as a comprehensive worldview that imbued every aspect of the social order.

Thus, heretical movements that called for the dissolution of the Church, as it was broadly understood in Western society, were seen as threats not only against the doctrinal tenets of the Church but against an embedded social institution appropriated by the vast majority of Western civilization.<sup>37</sup> The heretic, unlike the Muslim or Jew, was not considered a religious Other; he was labeled a malefactor or dissident whose attack upon the Church threatened the sociocultural stability of Western civilization. The Church would not tolerate popular dissension and conscripted the local magistrate to secure its place and purpose in society. According to the

Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the secular authorities of medieval Christendom were compelled to exterminate the intolerable heretic.

Unlike the heretic, however, the infidel or unbeliever was seen as wayward and outside of the Church's realm of forcible coercion. Medieval canon law taught rather consistently that forcible conversion of Muslims or Jews was contrary to the doctrine of salvation, which was a gift from God that must be "freely accepted."<sup>38</sup> The orthodox teaching of Thomas Aquinas, for instance, taught that heretics and apostates, unlike the Other, who have already embraced the Christian faith "must be compelled by secular powers" to fulfill their commitment to observing God's law.<sup>39</sup> Aquinas addressed this dichotomy of religious tolerance:

The Church does not forbid the faithful to communicate with unbelievers, who have not in any way received the Christian faith, viz. with pagans and Jews, because she has not the right to exercise spiritual judgment over them, but only temporal judgment, in the case when, while dwelling among Christians they are guilty of some misdemeanor, and are condemned by the faithful to some temporal punishment. On the other hand, in this way, i.e. as a punishment, the Church forbids the faithful to communicate with those unbelievers who have forsaken the faith they once received, either by corrupting the faith, as heretics, or by entirely renouncing the faith, as apostates, because the Church pronounces sentence of excommunication on both.<sup>40</sup>

Here one sees that a patient endurance of the nonbeliever was justified through an orthodox argument that salvation must be volitional, not coerced, while a heretic or apostate to the Christian faith was to be compelled, even corporeally, to fulfill their promise to the faith.

Two brief illustrations exemplify this dichotomy of tolerance between heretics and non-Christians. Frederick II (r. 1215–1250), was the Holy Roman Emperor and Ruler of Sicily and typified the ongoing conflict between Church and State. Initially lauded by Innocent III as "defender of the Church," he was later excommunicated twice by Gregory IX and deposed by Innocent IV. (Frederick II was a persistent geopolitical threat to papal territories.) Before he was accused of impiety and deposed, however, Frederick II was consumed with realizing a united Holy Roman Empire and purging the realm of heresy. Consequently, as representative of God in temporal matters, he officially abhorred dissent and was the first emperor to codify into secular law the burning of heretics.<sup>41</sup> In his *Liber Augustalis* or Constitutions of Melfi—a new anti-feudal legal codex for the Kingdom of Sicily, issued in 1231—Frederick assailed the destructive blasphemy of the heretic: "Heretics try to tear the seamless robe of our God. They are

violent wolves . . . Therefore we draw the sword of vengeance against them . . . They should be burned alive in the sight of the people.”<sup>42</sup>

Yet, the repugnance he showed the heretic was not expressed toward the Other. To the dismay of many, after reclaiming Jerusalem through a bloodless truce in 1229, he permitted Muslims to openly practice their faith and retain dominion over the area encompassing Jerusalem’s holiest sites.<sup>43</sup> In many ways, Frederick II exemplified the Machiavellian prince—exuding the force of a lion and the cunning brilliance of a fox. His pious orthodoxy was regularly subordinated to the reasons of state, and his principles often gave sway to expediency: he styled himself defender of the Christian faith, brutally suppressing heresy (though himself an excommunicant); and yet he kept a harem of Muslim women and enlisted Muslim mercenaries—who were beyond papal excommunication—as part of his “Christian” army.<sup>44</sup>

The reign of Alphonso X (the Wise), who ruled over the state of Castile from 1253 to 1284, is another interesting example of how tolerance of the non-Christian was incommensurate with that of the heretic. Tolerance was a social and political requisite in a state where Muslims and Jews represented a significant number of the populace. However, a stable and functioning body politic, not a latitudinarian viewpoint, undergirded this exceptional level of communal tolerance. While he did not permit the medieval Inquisition to operate within the state of Castile (motivated by the practical need to limit papal influence), Alphonso X did institute unsparing secular legislation against heretics, burning at the stake “those who would not recant.” At the same time, however, he took pride in characterizing his kingdom as a realm of religious tolerance, where Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities maintained a delicate coexistence.<sup>45</sup>

One should not infer from these localized examples that interreligious coexistence was an unblemished reality of the medieval era. It was not. A begrudging forbearance of non-Christians was clearly a part of official medieval doctrine, but discrimination (often violent) against non-Christian communities, and especially Jewish, within Western civilization and Western-controlled territories was an undeniable reality.<sup>46</sup> Judaism, for instance, was often a scapegoat for explaining internal instabilities of Christendom, as well as a frontline “enemy” of the Crusades. The massacre of the Jewish community in the French city of Rouen, an early expression of the religious fervor surrounding the first crusade, is indicative of the pragmatic fragility of tolerance afforded the Other.<sup>47</sup>

Although the West described Islam as a dangerous heresy in its inaugural centuries, it was eventually feared as a competing dispensation vying for dominion over other world religions. Islam deemed Christendom as an



uncivilized, localized, and fragmented abode that professed a nullified faith. Infidel or *kafir* became the most common reciprocal “insult” for Western and Islamic descriptions of the Other.<sup>48</sup> In Western history, official abrogation of tolerance and popular intolerance of the “infidel” was not uncommon. Yet, ironically, the Church’s tolerance of intellectual investigation into the vast corpus of Islamic learning and translations into Arabic of the great pagan texts is what stimulated a revitalization of intellectual life in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries of Western civilization.<sup>49</sup> As Cary Nederman notes, the highest level of “intellectual forbearance” during the medieval period may have emanated from the “open dissemination of Islamic learning.” Still, even though the intellectual importance of Islamic scholarship necessitated a limited and ultimately untenable acceptance of Muslim commentaries and translations of important Greek texts, tolerance for the greater human good was a reality in neither Western nor Islamic civilizations.<sup>50</sup> From a majority standpoint, Islam was a largely external threat, whose claims to Jerusalem and encroaching proximity threatened the religious and civilizational identity of Christendom.

The tolerance shown the “infidel” was inconsistent, and it was not unheard of for secular authorities or local communities, when confronted with political pressures or social and economic turmoil respectively, to differ with the Church on the principle of tolerance and the temporal benefits of intolerance. What is more, the Church generally reacted to unavoidable contact and, in some cases, coexistence with non-Christian cultures by “closing ranks, clinging to its self-proclaimed unity, and enhancing its efforts to suppress and persecute its enemies (real or perceived).” But, as Cary Nederman writes, “not every medieval thinker was entirely comfortable with repression as a response to religious nonconformity.”<sup>51</sup> There were contrary interpretations of the Church as a bulwark of *caritas*, patience, humility, and respect that countenanced a different approach to engaging the Other: namely, tolerance of human difference and conversion through gentle persuasion, enduring patience, and reasoned dialogue. A brief look at the personage and works of one medieval theorist, Ramon Llull, will help illustrate how the convoluted political and sociocultural contexts of the *Respublica Christiana* provided fertile intellectual soil for cultivating ideas of tolerance and coexistence toward the Other.

### **Ramon Llull: Tolerance via Dialogue**

One of the more pronounced medieval articulations of tolerance is found in the intellectual exercise of interreligious dialogue.<sup>52</sup> Peter Abelard (1079–1142)<sup>53</sup> and Ramon Llull (1232–1316) were two contributors to this

medieval style of philosophical discourse who recognized the finite nature of human intellect and the limits of compromise in the area of one's ultimate concern. For Abelard and Llull, interreligious dialogue, beyond simply impugning rival religions, demonstrated the "deep difficulties in achieving complete mutual understanding in matters of religion."<sup>54</sup> A specific examination of Llull's work will show how a discursive dialogue on truth between different faith communities should be encouraged, with the understanding that the desideratum of religious *concordia* is likely to remain elusive in a world of immutable difference.

Majorca, where Ramon Llull was born and spent half of his life, was a center of commerce, strategically located in the western Mediterranean, roughly the same distance from Catalonia as it is from Algiers.<sup>55</sup> The western Mediterranean, along with much of the Iberian Peninsula, had been under North African Muslim control—first by the Almoravid Empire in the eleventh and twelfth century and then by the more puritanical Almohad Dynasty at the end of the twelfth century. In 1212 the Almohad Dynasty was vanquished by an alliance of Christian princes in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. Within a few decades, except for the long-lasting petty kingdom of Granada, Moorish dominions on the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the Balearic Islands, were retaken by conquest, resulting in a significant number of Muslim inhabitants now under Christian suzerainty.

The Mediterranean island of Majorca became a focal point of political and economic internationalism. Muslims comprised a significant portion of the island's population. In fact, in the mid-thirteenth century, some still considered Majorca's capital and Llull's birthplace, Ciutat de Mallorca, later known as Palma, to be "the most nearly Moslem of Christian cities."<sup>56</sup> Though many Muslims were slaves, a sizeable contingent of "native and foreign" Muslims in Majorca were free, "both working the land and as artisans (painters, blacksmiths, bakers, etc.) in the towns" and providing "a regular source of taxes."<sup>57</sup> While they constituted a much smaller portion of Majorca's populace, Jewish inhabitants had a significant part to play in diplomacy (as ambassadors to North Africa), royal administration, Arabic translation, and economic development.<sup>58</sup> The intensity of this cross-cultural, interreligious contact, however, should not be perceived as selfless multiculturalism. Tolerance and coexistence were provisional, often "a matter of economic interest or of momentary balance of power."<sup>59</sup>

An autobiographical account of the latter half of Llull's life and journeys, entitled the *Vita coetanea* (Contemporary Life), was composed in 1311. Llull was a multilingual intellectual, who mastered the Arabic language for the primary purpose of encountering and debating his Muslim counterparts in the region.<sup>60</sup> In the *Vita*, we are told of Llull's journey to

Tunis in 1293 to debate and perhaps convert the wise men of the “Mohammedan religion.” There, within a “Saracen land” close to his Mediterranean home and frequented by Genoese and Catalan merchants, Lull entered a precarious realm of interaction, seeking a discursive dialogue with knowledgeable adherents of Islam. He reportedly asked if they would care to discuss the foundations of religious truth “calmly” and “in the most rational way.”<sup>61</sup> According to the *Vita*, a man “of no little fame among the Saracens” found Ramon’s words and intentions offensive and beseeched the king to order Ramon’s beheading. As a council was convening to discuss the matter, one of the Muslim councilors, “a man of prudence and knowledge,” called for tolerance through reciprocity, arguing that Ramon was attempting to spread his Christian faith with a disposition of goodness and prudence. His Muslim defender believed that Ramon was behaving “the same way a man who dared to enter Christian lands for the sake of imprinting the Saracen religion on their hearts would be considered a good Saracen.”<sup>62</sup> From this autobiographical account, it appears local instances of reciprocity and tolerance of sensible and respectful dialogue between Muslims and Christians were not unheard of in the thirteenth century. Of course, such tolerance was limited and locally contingent: Lull did not escape the occasion without insults and harassment by the multitude, and he was subsequently beaten and jailed when instigating similar challenges on a later journey.

Throughout his life, Lull’s primary motivation was never coexistence or human liberty but salvation. The truth of the Christian faith could be rationally proven through open argumentation. Thus, he strove to incite nonbelievers to the service of Christ through philosophical arguments and superior wisdom. Anthony Bonner, a definitive expert on Lull, describes how, “at all intellectual and social levels of society,” persuasion, not coercion, was of central importance for Ramon.<sup>63</sup> He was calculating in his observations, highly aware of the backgrounds and beliefs of his interlocutors, tailoring his words in an agreeable and most convincing manner. Perhaps his persuasive character is best demonstrated through the multiplicity of languages reflected in his writings: “When writing for Muslims, Lull wrote in Arabic. When writing for Christian lay audiences, he used his native Catalan . . . For a clerical audience, he would of course either write directly in Latin or have a Catalan original translated into that language.” The multilingual nature of his work testifies to his demonstrative nature and exquisite awareness of the particular community he was engaging.<sup>64</sup>

A product of this cosmopolitan environment of interreligious coexistence, Raymond Lull provided a salient contribution to the medieval genre of interreligious dialogue that remains instructive for interfaith engagements today. Lull’s most prominent work was the *Liber de gentili et tribus*

*sapientibus* (*The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*), which was translated during the Middle Ages into Spanish, French, and Latin.<sup>65</sup> The *Gentile* offers an intriguing argument for tolerance from the perspective of Llull's own cross-cultural, interreligious experiences of *convivencia* or coexistence in the Balearic Islands and the greater Mediterranean region. "As a result of his circumstances," Nederman points out, "Llull enjoyed greater familiarity with the actual teachings espoused by members of non-Christian sects." Because of this, the *Gentile* "more nearly reflects the complexities, socially and culturally as well as doctrinally, of multireligious experience,"<sup>66</sup> thus providing contextually contingent lessons on tolerance and coexistence that remain quite meaningful over seven centuries later—in a contemporary age where the need for interreligious dialogue and cross-cultural understanding is equally urgent.

\* \* \*

The *Gentile* is divided into four books and consists of a gentile and three wise men. In book one, the three learned men seem to speak in collective unison, upholding important commonalities of the Abrahamic traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—endeavoring to prove the existence of God and eternity. Throughout book one (and the Epilogue), the reader is unaware of which wise man is speaking, emphasizing how the truth being spoken was significant, while the orator's identity was not. The three learned men—a Jew, a Christian, and a Saracen—attempt to demonstrate the superiority of their faith to a learned Gentile (who is searching for life's meaning and purpose) in books two, three, and four, respectively. That heated disagreement is often a consequence of debate is demonstrated in the *Gentile*, but mutual respect is also clearly observable throughout. The intentions behind Llull's interreligious dialogue appear twofold: to provide a benevolent and virtuous "model" of noncoercive persuasion,<sup>67</sup> and to demonstrate through a dialogical framework of mutual tolerance how Christians, Muslims, and Jews might amiably coexist.

Within a thirteenth-century environment of religious plurality, the *Gentile* was more than just a polemical work.<sup>68</sup> Llull's *Gentile* gives close attention to the human dignity of all four participants in the debate: "We have the Gentile's tears of sadness at the beginning and of joy at the end; the Jew's sorrow at the successive captivities of his race; and the Saracen's assertion of the temporal efficacy of his religion (resulting in the Muslim possession of the Holy Land)."<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the civility and genteelness demonstrated by each disputant is another prominent feature of the *Gentile*. As Nederman notes, despite their membership to "competing

faiths, the wise men conduct themselves in a dignified and convivial manner.<sup>70</sup> The degree of coexistence between the wise men was significant, as benevolent engagement is portrayed by Llull as a regular occurrence and a source of enjoyment. The prologue of Llull's *Gentile* makes this interreligious friendship clear: "Three men met upon leaving a city. One was a Jew, the other a Christian, and the third a Saracen. When they were outside the city and saw each other, they approached and greeted each other in friendly fashion, and they accompanied one another, each inquiring about the other's health and what he intended to do. And all three decided to enjoy themselves together, so as to gladden their spirits overtaxed by studying."<sup>71</sup>

The cordiality and mutual esteem of the wise men is again given special attention in Llull's Epilogue. At the close of the *Gentile*, even though the enlightened seeker delayed announcing his preferred religion, the three wise men departed in a most benevolent manner, blessing and tearfully embracing one another.<sup>72</sup> When the *Gentile*, "in astonishment," queries why the wise men did not wait to hear which religion he had chosen, the wise men collectively replied that "in order for each to be free to choose his own religion, they preferred not knowing which religion he would choose." Here, Llull makes religion, for all three monotheistic faiths, a matter of free will—an unfettered choice for the nonbeliever. Persuasive dialogue is offered by all three wise men, but ultimately deference was respectfully given to individual reason and volition.<sup>73</sup> The *Gentile* concludes with the wise men "most amiably and politely" departing. Forgiveness was asked of each by each "for any disrespectful word he might have spoken against his religion," and it was agreed by all that tolerant discourse would continue as a mutually endorsed alternative to "war, ill will, and injury."<sup>74</sup> Llull's *Gentile* seeks religious *concordia*, but recognizes that in a world of deeply embedded religious difference and consequential intolerance, the efficacy of benevolent and tolerant dialogue remains the only sustainable means of persuasion and, for the foreseeable future, coexistence.

The *Gentile* offers the viewpoints of the Jew, Christian, and Saracen in an anachronistically balanced fashion that reveals important similarities and complex differences between them. As Nederman notes, the *Gentile* demonstrates how the "discovery of truth is a process shrouded in difficulty and uncertainty."<sup>75</sup> In a world of lasting difference, Llull's *Gentile* shows how strategies of tolerant dialogue and humane engagement are equivalences of the wise, regardless of religion or culture. Instead of the incessant persecution and intolerance that has characterized much of their communities' historical interaction, benevolent engagement emerges as an alternative method for "enlightening clouded minds and awakening the great who sleep, and for entering into union with and getting to know strangers and friends."<sup>76</sup> Llull's sapient dialogue offers a timeless lesson on how one's pursuit of religious truth, instead of causing division and

intolerance, can, through an interreligious ethic of tolerance, actually help ameliorate hostility and foster coexistence.

### **A Sixteenth-Century Expression of Interreligious, Cross-Cultural Tolerance**

Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner have edited a volume of essays written by fifteen leading scholars that collectively impeaches the orthodox perception that tolerance systematically emerged as a sixteenth-century phenomenon that reached maturation in modernity.<sup>77</sup> Instead, their collaborative work argues that instances of tolerance and intolerance (specifically religious) during the European Reformation occurred sporadically throughout every region of Europe and were consequences of localization—a product of the inconstant social and political considerations of local communities. Grell highlights the pragmatic (often expedient) nature of sixteenth-century tolerance: “Securing peace and co-existence in the local community had been of paramount importance to most city magistracies long before the Reformation . . . However, the need to establish religious concord added a new and difficult dimension in the Reformation period to this traditional area of magisterial concern; and it is noteworthy that where and when some form of religious toleration was granted, it was never offered as a policy of choice but as pragmatic.”<sup>78</sup>

Nevertheless, while local context and political-practical necessity have always been central motivations for temporal policies of tolerance, one should not discount its recurring use as a viable intellectual method for achieving important virtues such as liberty, patience, humility, and charity. It is impossible within the confines of this project to systematically recount each episode of or treatise on tolerance in the sixteenth century. Whether as a temporal expediency of a local magistrate, a necessity of survival for a dissident sect, a temporary strategy until eventual *concordia*, or as the only peaceful solution to interminable human difference, tolerance was an inconstant occurrence in Western civilization’s sixteenth century. For the general purpose of this chapter—to demonstrate the historical variations and complexities of tolerance in Western civilization—two disparate conceptualizations of sixteenth-century tolerance will suffice, that of Bartolomé de Las Casas and Jean Bodin.

#### *Las Casas on Intercivilizational Tolerance*

When studying Christendom’s sixteenth-century exploitation of the Americas and the conquerors’ brutal oppression or, in some cases, complete elimination of indigenous communities, one can easily become

incredulous to the existence of tolerance within, for instance, the expanding Spanish-Hapsburg Empire. A contextual Christianized theory of empire was devised to justify the Church's moral slide into ordaining intolerance and conquest through such Old Testament stories as Sodom and Gomorrah, likewise with Joshua's destruction of Jericho and its idolatrous inhabitants, as well as New Testament injunctions calling for *concordia*: "one fold, and one shepherd."<sup>79</sup> The infamous *Requerimiento* exemplifies how conquest and forcible coercion, not coexistence, was a temporal priority of the Spanish crown since the fifteenth century. The *Requerimiento* of 1510 was one religiopolitical mechanism for exculpating the conquerors and placing the fault of conquest on noncompliant native peoples. It was a statement read in Spanish or Latin (an exonerating prolog to forcible conquest and conversion)—unintelligible to non-Westerners—that required native populations to acknowledge the authority of the Catholic Church, the pope, and the crown and to allow the preaching of Christianity. Failure to comply justified the conquerors' forthcoming cruelty:

Wherefore . . . we . . . require . . . that you acknowledge the Church as the ruler and superior of the whole world . . . But if you do not do this, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of Their Highnesses. We shall take you, and your wives, and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command. And we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can, as to vassals who do not obey and refuse to receive their Lord and resist and contradict Him. And we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their Highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us.<sup>80</sup>

The *Requerimiento* shows clearly the Church's culpability in sanctioning coercive force and physical oppression of non-Western, non-Christian communities. The Empire, under the cloak of the Church, justified conquest of the New World's indigenous peoples as a divinely ordained means of spreading Christianity. The *Requerimiento* remains one of the most pernicious instances of intolerance in Western history, as temporal authorities exploited religious sources to justify temporal injustices and violent conquest.

The conscience of the Church was being vitiated by the spoils of conquest. Theological and philosophic arguments emerged in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries reinforcing a racist ontology that classified human beings as either superior or inferior. For example, John Major (d.

1550), a Scottish philosopher and theologian who lectured in Paris and Glasgow, defended Europe's domination of the New World. Drawing from Aristotle's *Politics*, he stated, "In Books I, III, and IV of the *Politics*, the Philosopher states that there can be not doubt that some are by nature slaves and others free, that this is inescapably to the advantage of some, and that is in [the matter] of dominion, which is as it were connatural, one must command, and therefore dominate, and another obey."

Major, via Aristotle, unabashedly deprived the Other of his or her human dignity and equality: "Those people [Indians]," he wrote, "live like beasts on either side of the equator." Dehumanization of the Other logically progresses to intolerance. Like Major, the Spanish theologian and philosopher Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (d. 1573), against whom Bartolomé de Las Casas would famously debate at Valladolid, also got "his poison"—to borrow from Las Casas—for enslaving the Other from the Philosopher, Aristotle. Sepúlveda saw no obstacle to the Spanish conquest over "these barbarians of the New World," who were, in every way, "as inferior to Spaniards as children to adults, women to men, cruel and inhuman persons to the extremely meek, . . . in a word, as monkeys to men."<sup>81</sup> Both thinkers were products of their time, accustomed to an inaugural age of discovery, conquest, and expansion, and motivated to legitimize episodes of brutal exploitation and dehumanization with discursive argumentation and creative moral casuistry. Las Casas was also provoked by a New World context. However, he would challenge this prevailing European worldview—marking both Major and Sepúlveda for debate—through a new, radical lens of conversion.

As mentioned earlier, tolerance is often a reaction to intolerance, and it was from this expansive environment of conquest and intolerance of the Other that one of the most sweeping and exacting arguments for tolerance and coexistence in the West was derived. Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474–1566), convicted by his own exploitation of the *encomienda* (forced Indian labor) and his direct witness of the human potential for brutality, experienced a "reconversion" in 1514 and devoted the last fifty years of his life defending the indigenous communities against the baleful policies of Western colonialism.

Born in Seville, Las Casas was a Spaniard who, through direct observation and a full command of Scholastic philosophy and reason, held his country ("civilization") accountable to its professed Christian convictions. Repulsed and broken by the reprehensible treatment of the native peoples by Spanish conquerors and landowners, as a Dominican priest, and later Bishop of Chiapas, Las Casas provided the Dominican reformers a principled and uncompromising voice for a peaceful and tolerant Christianity.<sup>82</sup>



Las Casas called for a cessation of the Spanish colonialism that dehumanized the non-Christian communities of the New World. The way in which Spain and the Catholic Church had yoked political and religious power for the sake of conquest and conversion was antithetical to Christianity and a misrepresentation of the genuinely religious. Las Casas argued that the only reason Pope Alexander VI issued his *Inter Caetera* (the papal bull of 1493), granting much of the New World to Spain, was to convert the unbeliever through love, charity, and persuasive dialogue.<sup>83</sup> The *Requerimiento*, the *encomienda*, and any other form of exploitation of native peoples and property for purposes of worldly gain was a mortal sin. Thus, the sole recourse was to withdraw the Spanish conquerors from among the native people and allow only missionaries to remain; and these missionaries were to teach the gospel through a Christian filter of noncoercion and goodwill.<sup>84</sup>

In such masterful works as *The Only Way*, *History of the Indies*, *In Defense of the Indians*, and *Apologetic History*, Las Casas reveals a profound penitence and a tireless commitment to the truth as it relates to the identical worth and immutable dignity of each person and civilization. He demonstrated how a quiet tolerance of difference was an essential strategy for higher goods: First, tolerance was an appropriate *way* to acknowledge the divinely ordained dignity of all of humanity. Second, it was a humane *way* for gently bringing others to salvation.

In his *Apologetic History*, Las Casas conducts an insightful investigation into the humanity of the Indians. Vetting the universal human condition, Las Casas declares that equality and freedom are divinely devolved to each person: "All the nations of the world are made up of human beings . . . All have the natural principles or germinal capacity to understand and to learn, and to know the sciences and things that they know not . . . From their very origin, all rational creatures are born free—inasmuch as, in one equal nature, God has not made us slaves to one another but has granted to all an identical choice . . . Therefore, it [freedom] is a natural right."<sup>85</sup>

Quoting Cicero, Las Casas underscores how no human being is bereft of natural rights or beyond obtaining virtue, for the resemblance of humankind "is clearly marked in its evil tendencies as well as its goodness," and the path to ameliorating the human condition and making "men better" can be traversed by all. Regarding equality and dignity, Las Casas makes a clarion call for the singularity of the human race: "All men are alike with respect to their creation and the things of nature, and none is born already taught."<sup>86</sup> The *imago Dei* rests in the essence of each human being, and it is this image of God locatable in the Other that precludes dehumanization and mandates a charitable tolerance of difference.

*In Defense of the Indians* offers one of the most cognitive challenges to the Aristotelian arguments of Sepúlveda, which rationalize chasing down and governing (enslaving) the “barbarians” for their own good. According to Las Casas, what Sepúlveda and his cohorts fail to consider is that the Philosopher “was ignorant of Christian truth and love.” Las Casas writes “Good-bye, Aristotle!” and defers to Jesus’s command to “love your neighbor as yourself.” Citing Dionysius, Las Casas assails the intolerable and “barbaric” burdens Church and State have imposed upon God’s creation: “One should not teach the ignorant, not torture them, just as we do not crucify the blind but lead them by the hand.” Indeed, for Christianity and Christendom, the “chase” can no longer be what Aristotle advised. Instead, the “chase” for the “converted” is one of meekness and *caritas*, one imbued with a spirit of tolerance.<sup>87</sup> In light of the connatural independence and dignity of each person, tolerance of the beliefs and practices of the Other becomes a sacred response.

Regarding the bona fide mission of the New Testament Church—which was to affect the salvation of humankind—tolerance of difference was a requisite to an unbeliever’s right to choose or reject salvation freely. To borrow from the Qur’an, “Let there be no compulsion in religion.”<sup>88</sup> Similarly, the final injunction in the Bible states, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life [salvation] freely.” Las Casas sought to uphold such ideals. Punitive and exploitative conversion of the Other was incongruent with authentic religion and wholly unacceptable to this shrewd and moral stalwart. In *The Only Way*, Las Casas quoted the distinguished twelfth-century author of the *Decretum*, Gratian: “Anyone forced to shift home or belief, shifts neither home nor belief, but is shifted.”<sup>89</sup> “The way of humility, peace, rejection of worldliness, fits with nature,” Las Casas wrote; “it draws people to moral life quicker and better—the way Christ intended—than force of arms.”<sup>90</sup> Consent through gentle persuasion, not coercion, was consistent not only with the Christian faith but with the traditions of philosophical reasoning as well. The best philosopher, he contended, “sets out his theme . . . with a soft voice, an eager look, graciously, with quiet argument and suitable language, with lively and lovely benevolence.”<sup>91</sup>

Christ understood the human condition, Las Casas wrote, and Christ ordered that people must embrace “His gentle rule of their own free will.” Each community, each person must have the liberty to accept or not to accept Christianity. Las Casas suggested Jesus’s table, where publicans and sinners, as well as disciples, were all welcome, as an example of Christian tolerance. Because none were afraid to approach Jesus, they could choose, unfettered, to embrace Christ without reticence and in perpetuity. If, like the Spanish conquerors, Christ had first ravaged the unbelievers through

war and its consequences, if Christ had scourged and lashed them “to the point of hatred,” they would not have willingly followed him but, instead, “avoided Him with a passion.”<sup>92</sup> This means that tolerance of religious and civilizational differences, even those differences which one finds to be offensive or untrue, is countenanced out of the necessity of a willing faith.

Recognizing that free will is essential to conversion requires a tolerance that endures “inferior” beliefs, while showing love and *caritas* to the individuals or communities that hold them. Again citing Gratian, Las Casas implored a gospel of peaceful persuasion and human freedom: “No choice of a thing, no say in it, no love of it. No love of a thing, easy scorn of it. Not good not chosen. The Lord commanded: Take no staff for the road, you could do someone violence with it. It is wiser to enkindle contempt for the world and love God and heaven with prayerful, persuasive preaching than by unleashing violence on people, etc.”<sup>93</sup>

Violence, Las Casas warned, “creates nothing able to last.”<sup>94</sup> Tolerance, motivated by love of God and human freedom, becomes an essential means for expressing goodwill toward the Other for the sake of salvation. “Let my brothers become weak with the weak,” urges Las Casas, “let them bear [tolerate] everything, with warnings, with beseechings, with tears openly, as Paul did, in order to save others.”<sup>95</sup> From this vantage point, for authentic religious mission “there must be no evil inflicted in any way, no force, no punishment on pagans who have never had the faith, if they do not want to listen to it or to welcome its preachers.”<sup>96</sup>

It is important to remain mindful of the fact that liberty or free will is not commensurate with tolerance.<sup>97</sup> Rather, tolerance, in this instance, is simply an effective strategy for achieving the important, faith-based goal of liberty. Thus, the contemporary argument that liberty has succeeded tolerance must be false. For with Las Casas, it is not a case of either tolerance or liberty. On the contrary, tolerance is a significant means by which to uphold human liberty: “We can claim no reward from what we have done unwillingly,” he writes.<sup>98</sup> What is more, the work of Las Casas appears to contradict those who argue that tolerance is simply “a last-ditch, expedient tool available to the powerful when forced to put up with the weak.” Las Casas’s argument for tolerance wholly contradicts such a thesis. He, in fact, called for imperialist Spain (the powerful entity), who had no geopolitical urgency to tolerate the native peoples of the New World, to embrace tolerance as an imprimatur of the Church and principle of a Christian empire, where authentic conversion of the pagan (the weak entity, in this case) precludes war, violent political subjection, or any other form of temporal coercion. “All those who wage wars of conversion,” warned Las Casas, “have no love for God; they have a hatred of God, they live without charity.”<sup>99</sup>

Converting the heathen can only occur through love and humility. In the words of one historian, whereas for “Sepúlveda and company, Christian principles and imperial necessities precluded the toleration of ‘barbarous’ practices,” for Las Casas, “toleration was a precondition to conversion.”<sup>100</sup>

It is widely believed that Las Casas’s work had a powerful effect on the position and future posturing of important church councils, to include the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and the Third Mexican Council of 1585.<sup>101</sup> Las Casas offered a profound conceptualization of tolerance, built upon human dignity, equality, and virtuousness, that greatly influenced the intellectual arguments of his contemporaries and those yet to come. Pragmatically, however, while Las Casas’s pertinacious character, intellectual acumen, and immovable religious principles were in large part responsible for the New Laws of 1542, which led to the gradual extinction of the oppressive *encomienda*, his call for tolerance was never fully appropriated by the Crown, and thus no palpable manifestations of principled tolerance or coexistence were sustained.

### *Jean Bodin: An Evolution of Interreligious Dialogue*

French jurist, philosopher, and humanist Jean Bodin (1529–96) redacted his notable treatise on tolerance amidst the incessant violence of the religious civil wars in France. Bodin would agree with his medieval counterpart Lull that religious tolerance was an essential requisite to humanity’s pursuit of truth and a consequence of unalterable human difference. Bodin, like Lactantius, Lull, and Las Casas before him, was a product of his sociopolitical environment. The religious unity of Christendom was no longer a realizable vision. Beyond Islam and Judaism, the Catholic Church now faced another formidable competitor—Protestantism. What is more, the sunderance of Protestantism in the sixteenth century into mainline denominations (Lutheran, Calvinist, and Arminian) and radical sects (Anabaptist, Socinian, Spiritualist, etc.) only added to the complexity of religious conflict in the West.

It was within a reality of political and religious rivalry and intolerance that Jean Bodin espoused his arguments for tolerance. For the latter half of the sixteenth century (until the Edict of Nantes in 1598), civil war enveloped France. For the Calvinist Huguenots, submission to the “papist idolatry” of the Catholic majority was an unthinkable Rubicon, politically and religiously. For the unorthodox Catholic, Bodin, religious coercion of individual consciences by Catholics or Calvinists was an act of opprobrium, antithetical to the true Christian faith.<sup>102</sup> In a 1590 letter, Bodin made a clear declaration against the blasphemous nature of the political

violence in France: “Victory depends on God, who . . . will punish those who, on either side, are covering their ambitions and their thefts under the veil of Religion.”<sup>103</sup> Disenchanted by the intolerance of both Catholic and Protestant governments in Europe, Bodin’s experiences in France and travels to neighboring countries, “seemed to crystallize his thoughts regarding toleration and freedom of conscience.”<sup>104</sup> As his thoughts on tolerance matured, Bodin eventually realized that religious persecution was not solely a Catholic or Protestant problem, nor simply a French, Spanish, or English dilemma; rather, it was a ubiquitous phenomenon of Western civilization, largely dependent on local and historical contexts.

Bodin’s 1558 *Colloquium Heptaplomeres de Rerum Sublimium Arcanis Abditis* (*Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*) was a Reformation-era contribution to the Western genre of the interreligious dialogue. Unlike his medieval predecessors, however, Bodin’s dialogue was necessarily expanded to include seven learned participants, speaking to the practical predicament of greater religious plurality. What is more, unlike the searching gentile in Lull’s dialogue, Bodin has no neutral, unbiased observer. Instead, all participants of Bodin’s *Colloquium* are men of conviction, portrayed as equal members of the human family.

The *Colloquium* is a discursive dialogue among seven learned men with varying religious beliefs: Coronaeus (Catholic); Salomon (Jewish); Toralba (philosophic naturalist); Curtius (Calvinist); Fridericus (Lutheran); Senamus (Skeptic); and Octavius (Muslim). Despite the deep religious differences between the various discussants, they all share a common conceptualization of harmony: a human *concordia* rooted in a contrasting multiplicity.<sup>105</sup> For Bodin, a harmonious and sustainable civil society was a corollary to political and religious diversity (atheism remained untenable for Bodin). Conflict between religions was, at the same time, a conflict between communities, states, and civilizations. Confronted with the violent realities of religious plurality in an age where the Church was still bolstered by the State, Bodin, through such works as the *Colloquium*, was attempting to relocate religious identity to the private sphere, while allowing it a limited, shared voice in the public—only then could a unity through religious diversity be conceived.<sup>106</sup> In any case, tolerance becomes an effective strategy for quelling interreligious dissonance by encouraging religionists to focus on how the different sounds of multiplicity create a melodic, singular humanity. To use Professor Marion Leathers Kuntz’s description, tolerance is a “by-product” or consequence of harmony: “Men who live in harmony, as Bodin conceived it, must of necessity be tolerant of each other.”<sup>107</sup>

In the *Colloquium* the Calvinist, Curtius, who moves beyond a rational argument to recite a didactic poem on the divine nature of diversity and

contrariety, espouses Bodin's concept of a melodic harmony through multiplicity and contradictions:<sup>108</sup> "Creator of the world three times greatest of all, . . . Who, moderating melody with different sounds and voices yet most satisfying to sensitive ears . . . Who directs the fixed courses of the heavenly stars from east to west, West to east with contrary revolutions, Who joins hatred with agreement, A friend to hateful enemies. This greatest harmony of the universe though discordant contains our safety."<sup>109</sup>

The philosophic naturalist, Toralba, agrees with this harmony via contrast, stating how distinguished men of "justice, integrity, or virtue" are only discovered through their reaction to men of opposing values; the luster of wisdom and goodness arise only in their distinction to opposing arguments of madness and evil.<sup>110</sup> Curtius contends that a state divided between two factions is most destructive, but a society with many factions is in "no danger of civil war, since the groups, each acting as a check on the other, protect the stability and harmony of the state." Octavius, a convert to Islam, then suggests the Turkish and Persian kingdoms as the epitome of such civil harmony. The kings of the Turks and Persians, he proclaims, "admit every kind of religion in the state," thereby achieving concordant support for a unified state through a remarkable harmony among "citizens and foreigners who differ in religions."<sup>111</sup>

In concert with Bodin's notion of unity through diversity is his defense of intellectual freedom and religious liberty. For Bodin, both harmony and human freedom necessitate a strategy of tolerance. Upholding liberty as the virtuous motivation for tolerance, Curtius recalls the pleas of antiquity. Quoting fourth-century apologist St. Hilary of Poitiers, Curtius exclaims: "God does not need necessary compliance. He does not require forced confession; He does not receive it unless the confession is made willingly." The Jew, Salomon, agrees, stating that no "more serious insult against God can be conceived than to force anyone to obey Him."<sup>112</sup> After Salomon and Octavius both recount episodic encounters of persecution toward Jews and Muslims respectively in the West, the Lutheran, Fridericus, opines how the suggestion of Theodoric, the ancient emperor of the Goths and Romans, should "be inscribed in golden letters on the door posts of princes." When advised by the Roman Senate that he should forcefully compel Arians to convert to Catholicism, Theodoric replied that an emperor was prohibited from commanding religion, because belief must come not by force but from the liberty of one's own volition.<sup>113</sup>

In the *Colloquium*, religious piety and truth were essential. In response to the skeptic, Senamus, who, to avoid offense, preferred embracing the religions of each member of the dialogue to make certain the true religion was not excluded, the Jewish Salomon paraphrases a New Testament passage in

Revelation, wishing that Senamus “were hot or cold rather than lukewarm in religion.”<sup>114</sup> “How is it possible,” Salomon inquires, for one to approve of all religions, whereby he ends up confessing and denying, at the same time, that Christ is God<sup>115</sup>? Except for Senamus, each of Bodin’s interlocutors maintained an unyielding fidelity to his unique perception of religious truth and ritual; and, for the sake of harmony, a free humanity, and the search for truth, all seven discussants tolerated the religious idiosyncrasies of the others.

Though the interlocutors maintained their distinct religious identities, mutual friendship and respect was never forfeited but remained an immutable reality throughout the discourse. Bodin closes the *Colloquium* with all seven participants embracing each other in mutual love, nourishing “their piety in remarkable harmony and their integrity of life in common pursuits and intimacy.” “Piety, uprightness, and mutual love” were approved by the seven participants, and the unity of a diverse human family was entreated by all.<sup>116</sup>

Over a century earlier, in what was arguably the most prominent work on tolerance in the Renaissance era, Nicholas of Cusa’s *De pace fidei* (1453) offered a conclusion suggesting that religious concordance, although unlikely, was still a possible solution for ending religiopolitical conflict. At the close of the sixteenth century, however, the optimism behind such a notion had waned significantly.<sup>117</sup> Written in a context of religiously-based civil war, the *Colloquium* expresses Bodin’s repulsion of interdenominational violence and longing to reach a peaceful solution appropriate to his era.<sup>118</sup> In an ending much different than that of Lull’s *Gentile*, Bodin’s participants simply agree to disagree—perpetually. “Afterwards,” Bodin writes, “they held no other conversation about religions, although each one defended his own religion with the supreme sanctity of his life.”<sup>119</sup> “Non-discussion,” to use professor Ingrid Creppell’s term, was Bodin’s solution to lasting coexisting between religious communities. Bodin recognized, as Creppell asserts, that “conflicts over religious beliefs inevitably ratchet up into conflicts of identity.” (This was the case in Bodin’s sixteenth-century France, where religious disputes between Catholic citizens and Huguenot citizens led to civil violence and political instability.) But within an alternate environment of religious nondiscussion, other linkages such as a common human identity and equal membership in civil society may, instead, be emphasized.<sup>120</sup>

Bodin’s highest concern was how interreligious dialogue might preserve the “flower of the whole world, France.”<sup>121</sup> He concluded that tolerance of religious difference provided a most efficacious method for achieving religious liberty and, thus, state tranquility. It was not eventual *concordia* that

enabled Bodin's seven participants to coexist; rather, for purposes of societal harmony and human freedom, it was a benevolent tolerance of interminable religious and communal difference.

### Synthesizing the Discussion

What has been the conceptual basis of tolerance in the West? Some found it necessary to legitimize the practice of tolerance theologically or philosophically. Others simply evinced tolerance from an unselfconscious, pragmatic perspective. Tolerance of the Other was an inconstant actuality of Western civilization that found both political and religious justification. Social historians are correct that political and pragmatic concerns certainly played a role in the writings and experiences of both tolerance and intolerance. While not a virtue itself, tolerance recurs throughout Western history as a pragmatic pathway to a peaceable society. Western civilization's diverging frameworks of tolerance emphasize the *a posteriori* influence of local context. Lactantius's observations, from pagans persecuting Christians to imperial edicts of religious tolerance, certainly motivated his work. Lull's thought was undoubtedly conditioned by his Mediterranean environment of religious plurality and his lifelong proximity to the Other. Las Casas's personal involvement with the unjust *encomienda* system and direct observation of the religious hypocrisy and brutality of the Spanish conquerors surely helped sustain his fifty-year pursuit of justice and tolerance for the Indians. Bodin's restive, warring France and its intolerant neighbors routed his evolving thought on the important place of tolerance. For each, context mattered, but so did conviction.

Beyond pragmatism and context, this chapter has endeavored to show how tolerance was also defended in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and through the Age of Reason as a principled strategy for achieving important virtues.<sup>122</sup> Liberty, patience, humility, and goodwill were important, recurring leitmotifs of tolerance through Western history. Contrary to the contemporary perception, the liberty of conscience espoused by early modern theologians and philosophers such as Roger Williams, Pierre Bayle, and John Locke was not a novel conception. More accurately, tolerance was a centuries-old concept that had been widely disregarded.<sup>123</sup> Over a millennium before Williams and Bayle, Tertullian, Hilary of Poitiers, and Lactantius were depicting coercion as antithetical to religion and declaring human liberty as central to one's ultimate concern. Likewise, for Lull, the Gentile was left to make his own decision regarding the true faith. After an open dialogue on truth by the three religious adherents, they departed in a spirit of benevolence, agreeing on the impermeable sanctity of the Gentile's



volition. The *Requerimiento* (inter alia) emphasized for Las Casas the ignominy of Spanish colonialism in the Americas and its harmful effects on authentic efforts of Christian mission among the indigenous peoples. Because the unbeliever must come to truth voluntarily, motivated by goodwill and gentle persuasion, tolerance was the *sine qua non* to permanent spiritual regeneration of indigenous peoples. Finally, Bodin, confronted with a restless era of ineradicable religious diversity and conflict, experienced an evolution in his own thought, ultimately concluding that the attainment of a peaceful and stable society necessitated an unfettered liberty of conscience and a respect of lasting difference. Throughout Western history, liberty was a recurring reason for tolerance. Indeed, there were many overlapping principles, as patience, humility, mutual respect, and friendship were coherent parts of the Western heritage of tolerance as well.

Importantly, tolerance is not commensurate with compromise; nor is it equivalent to indifference. On the contrary, the tolerance espoused by these diverse thinkers was a product of virtuous intentions; it was grounded on humankind's search for absolute truth and an appreciation for the pragmatic and transcendental limitations of compromise. An advocacy of tolerance did not mean these men were required to concede their deeply-held beliefs for the sake of coexistence; in fact, tolerance, for them, demonstrated the authenticity of their faith. This point is well made by J. Budziszewski. He offers the example of colonial America, contrasting Nathaniel Ward's sermons advocating coercive force to save the sinner (akin to Augustine's "benevolent severity") with the benevolent persuasion and principled tolerance of the Other preached by Roger Williams. In this case, Budziszewski states that in teaching tolerance, Roger Williams "loved God not worse than Nathaniel Ward, but better."<sup>124</sup> Authentic tolerance, as these thinkers have taught, is not compromise; rather, it embodies a humane, faith-based strategy of mutual esteem and cooperation across cultures and religions for the greater ends of humanity.

In every century of Western civilization, one finds writers who were profoundly affected by experiences of social, political, and religious division and in search for peaceful coexistence and a virtuous humanity. Yet, it should not be inferred from this chapter that tolerance was an even, consistent, and ever-present movement or idea throughout Western history. It was not. Rather, it was predominantly a minority view or practice, often overcome by official and systematic policies of intolerance. The problem of intolerance has been one of the greatest and persistent predicaments in Western history and is no less problematic today. Religion and culture remain ambient causes of violence, persecution, and division.

Western political scientists and theologians today belong to a multicultural, multi-faith civilization that can undoubtedly benefit from the instruments and ideas of tolerance employed by their ancient, medieval, and sixteenth-century predecessors. In a contemporary context of unprecedented plurality and enduring religiocultural division and intolerance, academicians and policymakers would do well to extract some positive lessons from the tolerance and coexistence conceived and experienced in the past. To borrow Cary Nederman's fitting conclusion, "There is simply no future for any theoretical attempt to understand political life, whether in the west or globally, that does not appreciate and take seriously the past."<sup>125</sup>

When it comes to conceptualizations and policies of tolerance, Western civilization has not reached the "end of history." In truth, contemporary conceptions of tolerance appear to have misplaced the lessons of the past. But this historical infidelity is a subject for the next chapter.

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# Modern Tolerance

## A Practical and Theoretical Critique

There are two kinds of tolerance. One is rooted in skepticism, the other in respect for truth and the dignity of others. We might refer to the first kind as pseudo-tolerance, the second as genuine tolerance.

—Donald Demarco

### Contextual Significance: Considering France

Migration has been a potent corollary to globalization. The mass immigration of Muslims to Europe is most significant, with millions of second- and third-generation immigrants now residing in Europe. Muslims from the Maghreb, West Africa, Turkey, the Indian subcontinent, and the Arabian Peninsula continue to immigrate to the European continent in overwhelming numbers. The number of Muslims in Europe is unknown—and estimates vary widely. One study concludes that about 17 million Muslims currently reside in the European Union—some 24 million when those European states currently negotiating membership or candidacy (not including Turkey) are included.<sup>1</sup> According to numbers released by the Central Institute’s Islam Archives in Soest, Germany, France has the greatest number of Muslims—primarily from the Maghreb—at well over 5 million, and Germany is next with more than 3 million, mostly of Turkish and Kurdish origin. While still a clear minority in European society (between 4 percent and 5 percent), the number of Muslims in Europe is expanding rapidly, increasing by well over 800,000 since 2003. What is more, the Central Institute has labeled Islam as a “young religion,” with, for instance, 850,000 Muslim minors living in Germany alone.<sup>2</sup> In one of his latest studies on religious demographics, Pennsylvania State University professor Philip Jenkins discusses how Muslims in France—who currently represent 25 percent of France’s “under twenty-five” population—could

conceivably comprise that same percentage of its entire population by the middle of the century.<sup>3</sup> As well, although Islam is still a minority religion in Western Europe, it comprises a much higher percentage of the “active” worshippers in Western civilization than does Europe’s mainstream Christian traditions.

Europe is facing a major demographic dilemma: an aging population and a declining birth rate. According to the UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, the median age (medium variant) of the world population in 2005 was 28, while in Europe the average was over ten years higher at 38.9. The fertility rate necessary to replace the rapidly aging population is projected at 2.1, but the European average forecasted between 2005 and 2010 is 1.45.<sup>4</sup> In confronting these demographic challenges, immigration has been the primary solution for offsetting Europe’s declining human capital; it has provided a lifeline for economic growth and sustainability. Jenkins references a United Nations prognosis that hypothesizes that Europe will require 1.4 million immigrants every year, “from now until 2050,” if it is to sustain “the 1995 level of working to non-working population.”<sup>5</sup> And, for Europe, French social scientist Olivier Roy is right: “The issue of immigration is . . . largely linked with the issue of Islam.”<sup>6</sup> Mainly due to immigration, the number of Muslims in Europe (“from Ireland to Russia”) has rapidly increased, from 18 million in 1970 to well over 30 million by the turn of the century.<sup>7</sup> With a European net migration from 2005 to 2010 projected at around 1 million per year,<sup>8</sup> Muslim communities—from a variety of African and Asian origins—will continue to affect Europe’s urban landscape, ensuring a meaningful Muslim presence for the foreseeable future. According to Roy, through processes of immigration and integration, “the frontier between Islam and the West is no longer geographical,” and, in fact, is becoming “less and less civilizational.”<sup>9</sup>

The ways European states have tried to mediate the cultural, political, and religious impacts of such high Muslim migration have varied from *de jure* assimilation or integration to *de facto* marginalization or segregation—and throughout much of Old Europe the latitude of tolerance afforded the immigrant Other continues to arouse heated debate. Nowhere is this more evident than the French Republic.

Since the seventeenth century, the nation-state has been ascribed a sacred significance, where national integrity and solidarity, in many Western societies, requires the political regime to limit tolerance to only those individuals and communities whose beliefs and practices neither contradict nor potentially undermine the spectrum of values that undergird the sacrosanct society of citizens. France, in particular, has long been considered the bastion of secular republicanism and individual liberty, a

symbol of modern tolerance.<sup>10</sup> While a French majority still claims a Catholic heritage, a nominal figure regularly participates in traditional public worship and ritual.<sup>11</sup> After Catholicism, Islam is the second-largest and fastest-growing religion in France, and societal attempts to assimilate the religiously active Muslim populace into the secular republic have proved largely ineffective. The *hijab* controversy is a case in point. The *hijab* or Muslim headscarf debate that currently rages in France offers a laboratory in which to observe and analyze the complex parameters secularism has placed upon religious liberty and the concept of tolerance.

Debate has intensified across Western Europe in the last several years over the visible display of religious symbols, most potently represented in the disputed rights of Muslim girls in France to wear the *hijab* in public schools. At the end of 2003, a presidential panel in France recommended that the state prohibit the outward display of Islamic headscarves, conspicuous crucifixes, and Jewish skullcaps in public schools. While the recommendation was made toward all three major religions, the official suggestion is widely viewed as a direct response to the social tensions that have festered from the perceived rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Europe.<sup>12</sup> Some in France view the ban as a political response to the growing problem with Islamists and the political symbolism the *hijab* is thought to promote. Although many Christian and Jewish religious leaders advocated against any law that would prohibit headscarves, in order to encourage a greater integration of France's more than five million Muslims into mainstream society, over 70 percent of the French electorate has indicated that they endorse the prohibition on religious garb in public schools.<sup>13</sup> The ban was instituted in 2004 and garnered the support of "some 80 percent of the French public," while at the same time arousing "fierce opposition from Muslims in Europe and beyond."<sup>14</sup>

Protection of the secular nature of the state remains unabated in France as it struggles to reconcile the right of religious and cultural freedom within the principles of secularism. Describing France as a "lay country," an MP from Jacques Chirac's UMP party, Jerome Riviere, stated that "in order to be able to worship wherever you want, you need to accept that others are worshipping somebody else." As such, he continued, "in schools . . . and public offices, we should completely ban any visible religious sign and specifically the Islamist's veil."<sup>15</sup> Many Muslims, however, lament the recent legislation as an example of Western intolerance toward their religious beliefs and customs, only exacerbating social tensions. One seventeen-year old student in Paris lamented that her country misunderstood the significance of the *hijab* in her faith: "We choose to wear the veil. But they want to ban us from wearing it and that infringes on our freedom. I think

Muslims are going to be bigger losers from this new law than any other religion here.”<sup>16</sup> While it is merely one of many transcultural struggles in Western civilization, the contentious cross-cultural debate in France is perhaps the most prominent example of the tenuous nature of coexistence in Western secular societies today, justifying a reanalysis and reconsideration of the conceptualization and purpose of tolerance in the West.<sup>17</sup> When considering contemporary framings of tolerance in the West, what should and should not be inside the fences of tolerability is, at best, unclear.

In light of the growing diversity of Western civilization and the challenges posed by cultural pluralism, this chapter will engage the idea of tolerance in modern Western society, addressing the peculiarities and discrepancies of its predominant conceptualization today and the formidable arguments put forth by its critics.

### **Distinctives and Deficiencies of Modern Tolerance**

The rise to supremacy of the individual is a modern historical phenomenon, finding its clearest ideological support and political expressions over the past three centuries. A prominent milestone for the autonomous individual was the French Revolution. Political theorist Michael Walzer expounds the significance: “The revolutionaries aimed first to free the individual from the old corporate communities and to establish him (and, later, her) within a circle of rights—and then they aimed to teach these rights-bearing men (and women) their citizenly duties. Between the individual and the political regime, the republic of French citizens, there was (in the minds of the revolutionaries) only empty space, which facilitated easy movement from private to public life and so encouraged cultural assimilation and political participation.”<sup>18</sup>

Gradually, the nation-state began to appreciate the limited necessity of secondary associations as organized forums for articulating individual curiosities, and so it provided “schools for democracy” and channeling collective grievances and desires. These “intermediate associations,” however, were accepted and even encouraged by liberal democracies only to the extent that their demarcation as lesser associations remained clear.<sup>19</sup> Any lesser association—religious, cultural, etc.—perceived as a latent threat to the sacrosanct collective of citizens remains a *bête noire* to most Western democracies today.

Undoubtedly, the private realm of liberal Western societies reveals a high level of tolerance toward difference, cultural or otherwise. However, the “public collective” remains, in most cases, wary and benignly, if not conspicuously, intolerant of those minority cultures that attempt to proclaim

their heterodoxies in the public sphere.<sup>20</sup> In France today, one can be a Muslim at home, in the mosque, and even in the thoroughfares, but in the public square (e.g., schools), he or she is, above all, French. Walzer explains the modern ideal further: “In principle, there is no coercion of individuals, but pressure to assimilate to the dominant nation, at least with regard to public practices, has been fairly common and, until recent times, fairly successful. When nineteenth-century German Jews described themselves as ‘German in the street, Jewish at home,’ they were aspiring to a nation-state norm that made privacy a condition of toleration.”<sup>21</sup> Whenever language, religion, ethnicity, or ideology functions as an instrument for civil unity, the majority’s public tolerance of a minority’s alternative identity approaches a more precarious level.<sup>22</sup>

According to the secular ideal, national and even civilizational unity is largely grounded on the individual. As such, within civil society, religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences are often aggressively subordinated to the “freedoms” of the hallowed individual. Assimilation or integration of individuals and lesser communities—through processes of socialization and varied efforts of cultural homogenization—is countenanced.

Portrayed as a cardinal principle of liberal multiculturalism today, tolerance is generally defined as an indifferent subjectivism. Political philosopher Michael Sandel describes the liberal attitude of tolerance (or toleration) as “non-judgmental” in that it “seeks to avoid passing moral judgement on the practices it permits.”<sup>23</sup> In addition, from the prevailing contemporary perspective, a tolerant society is one that espouses a sociopolitical correctness. It is intolerant of offense: the public expression of grievances, dislikes, and differences with the “private” ideas and practices of others is highly discouraged, if not officially prohibited. This neutral subjectivism is declared the only workable arrangement for a multicultural, interreligious society—if it is to avoid cross-cultural, ethnic, or sectarian conflict. An indifferent nonjudgmentalism, on the part of the state and its citizens, is warranted as the only sociopolitical framework for maintaining a multicultural society.<sup>24</sup> As national identity rests primarily with the citizen and the state, communities within the *community* are actively discouraged.<sup>25</sup>

The contemporary framing of postmodern tolerance was a consequence of the concentrated multiculturalism arising within Western civilization, amplifying the growing abstraction of difference and reducing diversity to an eclectic plurality of autonomous individuals. The postmodern ideal, writes Walzer, “undercuts every sort of common identity and standard behavior,” pointing “to the very perfection of individual liberty.”<sup>26</sup> Paradoxically, a cosmopolitan strangeness and sameness are simultaneously espoused. We are



called to recognize the uniqueness of our essence within the rudimentary commonality of our species. We are all deemed unique, just like everyone else. Such a perspective views as impertinent the “politics of difference.”<sup>27</sup> Because human sameness and strangeness are made catholic, community or cultural identity is indeed sacrificed by the postmodern project, as the declaration of universal sameness and strangeness make true difference inconsequential.

Does the individualized tolerance of modern Western society lack continuity with the history of tolerance in the West? Does postmodernity’s “unrestrained pluralism,” whether for the sake of power or individualism, enfeeble shared values or common human identity?<sup>28</sup> Contemporary thinkers contesting the predominant view of tolerance are emerging, arguing that the modern notion of tolerance is a misconception, filtered through prevailing contexts of Western skepticism, indifference, and state expediency. The communitarian opposition is of particular interest.

### *A Communitarian Critique*

A growing cadre of theorists and theologians are contesting modern tolerance as inauthentic. The late Baylor University professor A. J. Conyers represents this group well. He describes how the contemporary doctrine of tolerance demands that cultural differences (especially religious) be subordinated if the state is to maintain a stable society and retain the loyalty of its citizens.<sup>29</sup> The individual and the state—a “bipolar society”—are central to the modern conception that “the individual is the only unit of society worthy of making serious demands.”<sup>30</sup> Tolerance, from the perspective of the western-derived nation-state, is primarily directed toward “individual participants,” not the *lesser* groups of which those individuals may be a part.<sup>31</sup>

While the ostensible purpose of tolerance in modern Western society may be coexistence, it has been proposed that the underlying agenda behind its conceptualization is societal uniformity and the consolidation of power. In *The Long Truce*, Conyers remarked how the modern doctrine of tolerating others has made a significant detour from its Western historical variances. State sovereignty is of primary importance, he argued, and the consolidation of power provides a foremost stimulus for modernity’s version of tolerance: “The central power makes peace with groups by detaching them from their spiritual essence and then testifying to its respect for the dispirited remains of what was once both the body and soul of a culture.”<sup>32</sup> From this communitarian vantage point, modern tolerance, beginning in the seventeenth century, became a strategy for “diminishing

lesser loyalties” that competed with “the comprehensive political arrangement of the modern state.” Modern tolerance compromised competing customary authorities by questioning their moral competency and authority, as well as their loyalty to the burgeoning nation-state’s society of individuals.<sup>33</sup> The modern conception, argued Conyers, essentially negates those troublesome “secondary” associations (locale, family, church, etc.) by wearing away their ability to foster social solidarity among communities for reasons other than those of state interest.<sup>34</sup>

The communitarian critique analyzes and questions why the individual, since the late seventeenth century, was gradually recreated; he is no longer a responder within community but now an autonomous, isolated agent—not a means but *the end*.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the portrayal of tolerance as “non-judgmental” seems to espouse an ethical neutralism where relativity has triumphed over absolutes, and truth, it is argued, lay beyond the imperfections of individual or collective human understanding. Skepticism of transcendence, for instance, has progressed beyond the Cartesian idea of doubt leading to moral truth, to a general dismissal of the existence of the universal good.<sup>36</sup> From this perspective, liberal neutrality emerges as the contemporary solution, where individuals are reintroduced, from within a Kantian construct, as “ends in themselves rather than means to others’ ends.”<sup>37</sup> In a world of sovereign, morally neutered individuals, an ethical subjectivism has suppressed the notion of absolutes, leaving tolerance, in theory at least, unrestrained.

For the communitarian theorist, however, “a readiness to tolerate any idea or practice whatsoever has a corrosive impact on the shared values that form the foundations of a community. This is not to say that every member of a community must be committed to precisely the same comprehensive conception of goodness. But it is to assert that the existence of some standards held deeply in common defines the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion within any genuine community.”<sup>38</sup>

Here, first principles or “shared values” within an unfeigned community set important parameters on the conceptualization of tolerance, and an appreciation of group difference is encouraged. These shared values of a community—religious or otherwise—provide a customary moral authority for its members. Nicholas Lash, professor of divinity at Cambridge University, joins Conyers in rebuffing modern Western society’s litmus test of secularity, decrying “the self-constituting individual” that emerged from the Enlightenment and was solidified in the canons of liberal multiculturalism as a “fiction of the modern imagination”: “We can and do receive and accept all manner of things from outside our individual selves: things such as language and identity, shelter and suffering, pain and

delight, gratitude and disease.”<sup>39</sup> Conyers observed how a flourishing humanity is absolutely conditioned upon the “gifts of society and tradition—even traditions other than our own.” Genuine tolerance does not obstruct but, in fact, “serves . . . the forming and functional life of groups within society.”<sup>40</sup> Authentic tolerance, notes Conyers, is an expression of humility that challenges the narcissistic propensities of the individual, enabling the cultivation of meaningful groups. His communitarian description of authentic tolerance is discerning: “It [tolerance] draws naturally from the spirit of self-sacrifice. It endures assaults upon its most long lasting dogmas for the sake of making dialogue possible, because the process of dialogue even about . . . the most cherished convictions, is the heart and soul of a group, whether a family, church, or a community of professionals, or a region that shares distinct practices and manners and patterns of language.”<sup>41</sup>

The timeless characteristics of humility, patience, and endurance are at the core of authentic tolerance. Whereas modern tolerance seeks a dialog that is expressly confined to a “deep-seated suspicion that undergirds much of modern thought,” genuine tolerance, Conyers concludes, is “a rediscovery of the freedom afforded men and women to think and act in a world designed for human beings to inhabit in peace.”<sup>42</sup>

### *Engaging Liberalism: An Appraisal of Rawlsian Tolerance*

Tolerance, or “the principle of toleration,” came after the Reformation and the sixteenth-century wars of religion.<sup>43</sup> So reasoned the late Harvard philosopher John Rawls. Here one finds the argument, challenged in chapter two, that the conception of tolerance was a triumphal accomplishment of the liberal narrative, a product of constitutional democracy and its requirements for liberty of conscience and egalitarian justice. Liberalism’s political conceptualization of tolerance was rendered necessary in order to ensure liberty of conscience. As shown in the previous chapter, liberalism’s purpose of liberty is only one of many justifications for the theorizing and practice of tolerance. Moreover, tolerance, embraced as an effective means toward the end of human freedom, was not unique to modern Western society but was theorized long before the seventeenth century.

For liberalism, tolerance, more than just a method for achieving the important goal of liberty, is seen as a countervailing instrument, necessary to temper the various comprehensive doctrines competing in a pluralistic society.<sup>44</sup> Liberalism’s more recent theories on the social contract, expressed most poignantly by Rawls, follow the Kantian vein of upholding the “equal ultimacy” of the individual, placing representative persons “in

an Original Position in which each forgets the things that distinguish him from every other.”<sup>45</sup> In the original position or, to use Rawlsian imagery, behind a “veil of ignorance,” individual representatives will be indisposed to speculation and thus propose an impartiality and freedom of citizens for the sake of attaining a broader community consensus.<sup>46</sup> Principles of justice will arise, argues Rawls, when citizens honor the shared views of a sustainable society. Essentially, these shared values are commonalities that may be located within the various comprehensive doctrines of society but must be expressed, with no prior obligation to any of the competing comprehensive doctrines, in a universal political language. In upholding these shared views, “citizens show themselves autonomous, politically speaking.”<sup>47</sup>

Rawls argued that society must disregard how the comprehensive doctrines of its members justify the egalitarian concept of justice (or fairness) and, instead, regard (from behind a veil of ignorance) the resultant societal framework as derived from the “various fundamental ideas drawn from the public political culture of a democratic society.”<sup>48</sup> Thus, individual representatives, when placed in the original position, are precluded from putting forth arguments for a similar conception of equality and fairness from any particular religious, philosophical, or moral doctrine. According to Rawls, in a Western age of “reasonable pluralism,” social cooperation renders it both acceptable and necessary to exclude religious and moral comprehensive doctrines as “good reasons” for legitimizing a fair and equal society.<sup>49</sup> As such, the high level of pluralism in Western constitutional states necessitates a conception of fairness in the body politic that is tolerant of only those attributes within a comprehensive doctrine that find an overlapping consensus with competing dogmas. Moreover, because of the persisting inevitability of a diversity of doctrines and views in a pluralistic society, Rawls advocates a political framework of equality and fairness that, inasmuch as possible, is not conceived through or committed to any one comprehensive doctrine.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast to the prevailing contemporary conceptions of tolerance, an open recognition of difference is essential to the overarching objective of this book: lasting coexistence. Rawls is correct that a stable multicultural society requires a civil unity that establishes a neutral citizen identity; but does it necessitate a dilution or compromise of group difference? Public discourse can be an effective means for helping citizens to mediate their divisions in a neutral forum without having to completely discard what distinguishes them. The “veil of ignorance,” as Budziszewski explains, is there to “temporarily erase” from the memories of individual representatives all that sets them apart from each other. While the suggested model is

creative and profound, in reality, we cannot divorce ourselves from these personal peculiarities.<sup>51</sup>

A peaceable global society—coexistence—renders necessary a cross-cultural, interreligious conceptualization of tolerance. An understanding of tolerance must be developed (or restored!) that is not divorced from the comprehensive doctrines out of which moral clarity and societal consensus must ultimately find succor. Common, overlapping foundations are imperative, but they must first be found within the ultimate concerns of the individual and his community—not simply under the moral shadow of political liberalism. To displace such foundational justifications behind a “veil of ignorance” is only sustainable in a society bereft of communities and persons whose highest order of goods necessarily transcends any temporal conception of the body politic. Instead of liberalism’s moral, religious, and philosophical vacuum, so to speak, to achieve meaningful and lasting coexistence, social and political cooperation must, in the end, strive, in good faith, to establish a consensual moral (and political) framework that, inasmuch as possible, finds legitimacy from among the comprehensive doctrines interacting within the aggregate pluralistic community. Coexistence in an increasingly diverse Western civilization requires, more than ever, an open dialogue between participating traditions in a manner that combines open contestability with a deferential regard for particularities.<sup>52</sup>

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Perhaps the most devastating effect of liberal tolerance is its neutrality toward conceptions of the good. (In liberal parlance, *neutrality* and *tolerance* are often used interchangeably.) From a utilitarian vantage point, a successful constitutional democracy is one where competing ideas of “the good life” circulate unfettered. Undergirded by skepticism and the practical needs of stabilizing a pluralistic society, an ethical neutrality or non-judgmentalism in civil society is endorsed. Philosopher Donald Demarco has termed this liberal concept *pseudo-tolerance*, arguing that it is often mistaken for *genuine tolerance*—and, as a result of this mistake, Western civilization is addling from “tolerance confusion.”<sup>53</sup>

Michael Sandel presents a pithy critique of this “nonjudgmental” or *pseudo-tolerance*, contesting its marginalization or “bracketing” of the religious and moral questions and its “minimalist” preoccupation with the political, amoral language of the body politic.<sup>54</sup> Justice, for Rawls, is fairness—an impartial equality. However, a consensus on the meaning and sanctity of justice, at local and global levels, cannot exist outside of the moral and religious values that condition that consensus. Unlike the liberal

conception of tolerance, authentic (“judgemental”) tolerance allows—in fact, it requires—that public policies and arrangements “express rather than avoid a substantive moral judgement.”<sup>55</sup> If a culture cannot normatively contest the doctrines of violence and dehumanization that compete for allegiance within its own ideological and territorial borders, then a cross-cultural consensus on the issues of tolerance and coexistence is certainly unreachable. To require that an individual or community set religious and ethical influences aside when entering the public square for the sake of societal stability is an impossibility—especially in the area of religion. For instance, while a disestablishment provision separating Church and State may help to ensure a religiously neutral government and prevent a misguided house of worship, neither a person nor his community can be expected to wholly separate religious identity and beliefs from their participation in the body politic.

The English writer G. K. Chesterton lamented the indifference of modern tolerance, calling it “the virtue of the man without convictions.” Like Chesterton, the twentieth-century Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain assailed the secular conception of tolerance for its indifference to humankind’s ordered search for truth. Referencing Pontius Pilate—a first-century progenitor of *pseudo-tolerance*—Maritain writes that “the man who says: ‘What is truth?’ as Pilate did, is not a tolerant man, but a betrayer of the human race.” A Pilate or secular skeptic, who believes truth to be unknowable, therefore countenances neutrality or indifference toward the good.<sup>56</sup> Donald DeMarco deftly anatomizes Maritain’s contention with *pseudo-tolerance*. “The person who is genuinely tolerant,” DeMarco explains, “does not turn his back on truth, as did Pilate, nor does he disparage others for not having already found it.” The predominant liberal conception of tolerance (*pseudo-tolerance*), DeMarco concludes, is grounded on “intellectual bankruptcy” and a “radical devaluation” of truth. Unlike *pseudo-tolerance*, *genuine* tolerance is attainable only when a person can embrace his or her discovery of truth while concomitantly acknowledging “the right of others who deny this truth to speak their own mind.”<sup>57</sup>

### *Tolerance Rightly Conceived: Strategy or Virtue?*

There exists contemporary inclination to assign virtue to the project of tolerance. Professor A. J. Conyers argues, however, that the tolerance of others is not a virtue but, instead, a *strategy* that “calls upon virtues, such as patience, humility, moderation, and prudence.” A tolerance of others is not comparable to the virtue of love, humility, or liberty; rather, it is a “modus

vivendi” or “strategy” for reaching “a goal in something else.”<sup>58</sup> Conyers insightfully remarks how there is never enough of any virtue in human society: there cannot be too much love, hope, or prudence. However, unlike these ancient virtues, there can be too much tolerance. Tolerance has limits, and while those limits have been and continue to be debated (blasphemy, obscenity, privacy, punishment, justice, liberty, truth, etc.), it is not incorrect to say that every individual, community, and culture maintain categorical parameters on what should not be tolerated.<sup>59</sup>

Political theorist Cary Nederman would agree with Conyers that the value of tolerance, in the end, depends on its function—the goal for which it is designed to accomplish. Through his expositions on tolerance in the works of medieval thinkers, such as John of Salisbury, Marsiglio of Padua, and William of Rubruck, Nederman shows how the tolerance of others becomes “necessary by the conditions—physical, psychological, or both—imposed by divinely-created (if flawed) human nature itself.” Intellectual humility, *communal functionalism*, and divinely ordained sociocultural diversity have all been important goals that rendered a framework of tolerance necessary. The tolerance of the beliefs and practices of others is thus “not a good or an end in itself, but a course of action or inaction sanctioned, ultimately, by God himself inasmuch as He created and endowed humanity with certain capacities and frailties.”<sup>60</sup>

Catholic philosopher Donald DeMarco acknowledges the inherent association tolerance has with virtues such as love and prudence. However, he contends that tolerance alone is not a first principle but an epiphenomenon that emerges from virtuous intentions: “Tolerance is a secondary phenomenon. It is a response to something that preceded it . . . it is critical to understand the moral nature of what took place first. It is preposterous in the true sense of the word (*prae + posterius* = putting ‘before’ that which should come ‘after’), to make tolerance a first principle and demote the initial action to a place of secondary importance.”<sup>61</sup> It is thus from the urge to be virtuous—to be loving, hopeful, patient, charitable—that tolerance materializes as a valuable strategy—a creditable course toward a virtual purpose.

While J. Budziszewski would join the theorists just mentioned in disputing the modern birthright of tolerance, he contends that tolerance is indeed a virtue.<sup>62</sup> Budziszewski begins with the postulation that tangible rights and wrongs, goods and evils, are, with varying difficulty, universally observable. In other words, what is right and what is wrong is individually and collectively discernible. True tolerance, he writes, is a virtue that encompasses the complicated reasons behind why one puts up with what one *rightly* determines to be *wrong*. Tolerance is a peculiar virtue that

enables one to interpret the appropriate ethical limits on when, why, how, and to what extent a *wrong* “ought” to be endured without interference.<sup>63</sup> For Conyers, tolerance is simply one available strategy for achieving important virtues, but for Budziszewski, tolerance is itself a virtue that engages and is often interdependent with other virtues, such as charity, courtesy, and humility.<sup>64</sup>

This author tends to agree with Conyers that tolerance is an important operational quality that can positively affect important objectives such as coexistence and virtue. When considering the cogent, albeit trite, maxim, “Virtue is its own reward,” tolerance does not seem applicable, as it is not a reward in itself but a means to reaching such a reward.<sup>65</sup> Its value is determined by the intrinsic worth of the ends in which it is employed to accomplish.<sup>66</sup> Thus, in addition to how it is conceived, the value of tolerance is verified by its motivation.

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Regardless of its virtue or lack thereof, both Conyers and Budziszewski offer coherent conceptions of tolerance that are consistent with its complex heritage in the West. Budziszewski’s description of “true” tolerance is particularly noteworthy: “[Tolerance] is not forbearance from judgment, but the fruit of judgment. We may disapprove something for the love of some moral good—yet we may be moved to put up with it from still deeper intuitions about the same moral good or other moral goods, and on such deeper intuitions the discipline of tolerance is based.”<sup>67</sup>

For Budziszewski, tolerance may be formulaically stated thus: putting up with an evil in “just those cases where its suppression would involve equal or greater hindrance to goods of the same order, or any hindrance at all to goods of higher order.”<sup>68</sup>

To discern the boundaries of *authentic* tolerance, as described by Conyers, DeMarco, and Budziszewski, one must acknowledge the precarious realm of what theologian Paul Tillich terms the *ultimate concern*—what an individual or community considers to be the highest order of the good. “Whatever concerns a man ultimately,” wrote Tillich, “becomes god for him, and, conversely, it means that a man can be concerned ultimately only about that which is god for him.”<sup>69</sup> From this transcendental vantage point, an attitude of tolerance can only exist if sanctioned by one’s highest object of loyalty. Thus a devout Christian or Muslim, for example, must ultimately locate the necessity and limits of tolerance supernaturally (from God) before it can be effectively appropriated toward his or her fellow humanity. Peaceful coexistence, free trade, democracy, or any other “less



than ultimate” concern is a forceful argument for justifying tolerance but only insofar as one’s ultimate concern approves.<sup>70</sup>

*UNESCO Declaration of Tolerance:  
A Gauge of the Modern Conceptualization*

Perhaps the prevailing Western conceptualization of tolerance is best defined in the well-intended, but ambiguous, UNESCO Declaration of Principles of Tolerance:

Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world’s cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace . . . Tolerance is not concession, condescension or indulgence . . . It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments . . . It means that one is free to adhere to one’s own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs . . . It also means that one’s views are not to be imposed on others.<sup>71</sup>

Undoubtedly, the purpose of the United Nations’ quest for a global understanding and declaration on tolerance is noble and, indeed, necessary. Tolerance is rightly suggested by the UN as an important international strategy for combating the violations of human rights, armed conflicts, and violence plaguing many cross-cultural, inter-religious societies. The UN’s “Global Quest for Tolerance” makes a spirited call for coexistence with others as good neighbors.<sup>72</sup> As well, there are attributes of the conceptualization of tolerance described earlier that are vital to cross-cultural coexistence today. For example, the “freedom to adhere to one’s convictions” and accepting that others are free to adhere to theirs, is an important element to living peacefully in a world of immutable differences. Yet, despite its important contributions, there remain significant inconsistencies or contradictions within the declaration that contribute to its general ambiguity and ineffectiveness. For instance, the declaration calls for an “appreciation” of our world’s diverse “forms of expression and ways of being human.” Whether for reasons of coexistence or the achievement of important virtues, such as liberty, justice, or peace, the *respect* and *acceptance* of seemingly inalterable differences are indeed core characteristics of tolerance. However, the rudimentary essence of what it means to be tolerant

is immolated in the declaration's plea to *appreciate* such differences of expression and ways of being human. Here one clearly finds the underpinnings of liberal multiculturalism, where difference is not endured in an effort to achieve a higher order of goods but simply embraced or *appreciated*. Walzer describes this untenable framework of tolerance as "aesthetic endorsement," where tolerance of the Other no longer means forbearance but, instead, an "enthusiastic" backing of those ideas and practices that constitute otherness. How can I tolerate, Walzer asks poignantly, "what I in fact endorse?"<sup>73</sup>

Another glaring deficiency of this modern understanding of tolerance is its pronounced intolerance of absolutism or dogmatism. Indeed, tolerance must have limits. Humanity should not, and meaningful coexistence cannot, tolerate those individuals and groups who espouse an intolerance of cultural, religious, or ethnic otherness that condones violence, oppression, or simply disengages the Other from the greater community solely because of cultural idiosyncrasies or refusals to assimilate. Such dogmatism is indeed intolerable. It stands in opposition to any strategy of tolerance and is antithetical to coexistence. This, however, does not mean that individuals or communities must be precluded, *prima facie*, from embracing doctrinal absolutes. As demonstrated earlier, it is in fact a community's "ultimate concern" (for Christians and Muslims, for example) that lends credence to the ethical probity of tolerance. From a modern Western perspective, a tolerant society is "nonjudgmental." For the devout Christian or Muslim, on the other hand, tolerance is, at its core, judgmental. According to the nineteenth-century English novelist Sir Walter Besant, "tolerance is the eager and glad acceptance of the way along which others seek the truth." Such a conceptualization, however, is devoid of divine vindication, as righteous tolerance neither eagerly nor gladly accepts the "wrong" or "repugnant" ways by which the Other may seek the truth. In contrast, a righteous tolerance endures the diverging beliefs and ways of the Other for reasons of a higher order, such as peace, liberty, or justice, usually desiring sameness and advocating gentle persuasion. The Other is gladly, and perhaps eagerly, accepted, but their "inferior" ways are to be charitably endured.

Chapter two demonstrated (as will subsequent chapters on the roots of tolerance in Islamic culture) how tolerance cannot presumptively disregard systems of absolutes as antithetical to its conceptualization. Rather, individuals and communities must be encouraged to find legitimacy and justification for tolerance and coexistence from within their religious and cultural traditions. For instance, if a group's religious beliefs countenance a strategy of tolerance for the sake of peace and human liberty, then a lasting

support of such a strategy becomes essential. That tolerance is a rational means for achieving coexistence is secondary to one's faith-based directives. The fact that tolerance is certainly a reasonable strategy for realizing coexistence is simply an added benefit. Ramon Llull and Jean Bodin demonstrated how coexistence came, not through a dilution or compromise of absolutes, but through recognition of human society's diverse and complex religious and cultural traditions. For Llull and Bodin, unity did not require that communities disassociate their embedded idiosyncrasies for the sake of unity. Instead, unity came through an interreligious search for common principles of coexistence, which, via tolerance, respected dogmatic differences while, at the same time, embracing the humanity of the Other.<sup>74</sup>

### France Reconsidered: The Case of Marseille

A number of political theorists, philosophers, and theologians have suggested the *hijab* controversy in France as a useful contemporary context for measuring the ability of modern tolerance to address the timeless challenge of locating harmony in diversity. The weeks of rioting in 2005 by disenfranchised Muslim youths in suburbs across France is also illustrative, as the touted claims of tolerance in modern Western society came under increased scrutiny for their inability to quell the unrest. Yet, it is interesting to note that, although France is often portrayed as emblematic of modern tolerance and the secular ideal of *laïcité*, it is within this same immigrant nation that we find an intriguing antithesis: the city of Marseille.

Marseille, the centuries-old port city on the Mediterranean, is France's oldest city and remains its most important commercial seaport. Moreover, Marseille is the second-largest city in France, with close to a million inhabitants. Trade and immigration are two historical priorities of this important city that have instigated periods of conflict with the French state. Independence and pluralism are deeply embedded attributes of Marseille, a city replete with unfettered variety. In a 2005 report, *National Public Radio* offered an insightful analysis of this independence and diversity, describing Marseille as a city whose back is turned against France, physically and philosophically.<sup>75</sup> Following successive weeks of violence and rioting across France in 2005, the question was asked: Why was Marseille spared from the widespread rioting?<sup>76</sup>

Marseille is a collage of religions, ethnicities, and languages. Cultural difference is highly transparent and extensive. Roughly 35 percent of Marseille residents are of Italian descent, 15 percent North African (primarily of Tunisian and Algerian origin), and 10 percent Jewish. There are sizeable

Armenian, Turkish, Russian, Greek, Vietnamese, and Chinese communities as well. “Marseille . . . is the portal of France, the waiting room for integration,” said Marseille’s mufti Soheib Bencheikh. He continued: “Here you have many communities over many generations. People here are not disturbed by strange or foreign behavior of others.”<sup>77</sup> In a community of such overwhelming cultural diversity, dialogue and engagement are critical. For Marseille’s residents, contrary to customary French policy, difference is approbated as an acceptable aspect of community. For individual communities, sameness may be the inherent desire, but, for the sake of coexistence and virtue, a tolerance of difference is favored. City officials have utilized a twenty-year-old program that fosters proactive dialogue between communities known as Marseille Hope. When conflicts arise between religious or ethnic groups, Marseille’s city authorities use such programs to bring representatives of the community together to discuss current issues of conflict in an effort to quell any unrest or swelling resentment.<sup>78</sup>

Unity comes not through uniformity but through a sense of belonging—belonging to a society tolerant of difference. Of course, Marseille is not devoid of problems.<sup>79</sup> Community conflicts do arise, and economic hardships are often concentrated in the more recent immigrating communities. Marie-Noelle Mivielle, an assistant to Marseille Mayor Jean-Claude Gaudin, stated as much: “We’re not saying there could be no explosion here. That is not the case. We are neighbors and recognize that neighbors have differences.”<sup>80</sup> But a suppression of community difference is not Marseille’s solution to a peaceful society. Rather, coexistence comes through an open recognition of difference, proactive engagement between communities, and public policies that encourage integration into a society that nurtures unity through diversity. Marseille, as one reporter put it, is a “spicy stew of nationalities.”<sup>81</sup> “It’s obvious there are problems here,” stated Nassim Khelladi, an Algerian-born citizen of Marseille, “but there’s a huge amount of respect in this city and a great willingness to work together.”<sup>82</sup>

As in any major city, ghettos exist. However, unlike other French cities, minority communities are centrally located, not exiled to some outlying suburb.<sup>83</sup> “We have our troubles, but I can go to the center of the city without thinking I am entering enemy territory,” said Abida Hecini, a resident of Marseille and mother to six children.<sup>84</sup> “We belong to Marseille and Marseille belongs to us.” Lauding the unique qualities of Marseille, Dia Ghazi, a Palestinian-born citizen and business owner, expressed pride in his city’s ability to coexist: “Here, we all have contact with each other. That’s the way it’s always been here. We are not separate from each other.”<sup>85</sup> The outdoor marketplaces, city centers, beaches, and thoroughfares externalize these claims of coexistence, as merchants, vacationers, and shoppers from

different ethnic and religious backgrounds and young people of various social classes and cultures engage one another in a spirit of tolerance, befriending and respecting each other—harmony in difference.

That Marseille was spared the three weeks of disquiet that beset Muslim communities across France is noteworthy. In Marseille, communities are not segregated, and difference is not sacrificed for the sake of social cooperation. “I dislike going to Paris,” remarked Dia Ghazi. “They are cold there. A few days, and I want to return.”<sup>86</sup> Immigrants like Dia Ghazi find a sense of belonging in Marseille and, as a result, make proactive efforts to ensure a long-term coexistence through strategies of authentic tolerance and dialogue.

There is always an underlying tension to coexistence, as different ethnicities and religions inherently conflict. It is this underlying tension that makes tolerance both necessary and desirable. Tolerance serves an important role in nurturing coexistence through acknowledging, and even contesting, immutable differences, while committing to an ecumenical humaneness and mutual goodwill. In a number of ways, the tolerance espoused in Marseille is nearer to the ideas of Llull, Las Casas, and Bodin than those of modernity. Living with otherness is not easy; it is hard. Authentic tolerance is not supporting otherness; rather, it is learning to live benevolently with the Other. From the vantage point of one’s cultural heritage, ethnic roots, or religious beliefs, tolerance may be conceivable, but a nonjudgmentalism or indifference is not.<sup>87</sup> The Arab, Jewish, and Greek communities of Marseille do not achieve coexistence through moral subjectivism but through a highly judgmental attitude that disagrees, and perhaps even despises, the beliefs and practices of the Other but respects, in a charitable manner, their human dignity and inherent freedom to be different. Coexistence and civil unity are formed through an attitude of tolerance, where common ground is sought and dialogue and respect are of foremost importance. Tolerant individuals and communities, Walzer explains, “make room for men and women whose beliefs they don’t adopt, whose practices they decline to imitate; they coexist with an otherness that, however much they approve of its presence in the world, is still something different from what they know, something alien and strange.”<sup>88</sup> Coexistence means actively engaging, in a spirit of tolerance, with one’s neighbors, and, in an era of globalization, the neighborhood is indeed vast, encompassing many cultures, religions, and ethnicities.

### Summary

This chapter has discussed the challenges facing the modern Western conceptualization of tolerance—in particular, its inability to effectively facilitate

the rising cultural diversity of Western civilization. This, of course, is not to suggest that today's prevailing understanding of tolerance is unable to contribute to resolving contemporary conflict. Rushworth M. Kidder, founder of the Institute for Global Ethics, is right to suggest that societies have a "perpetual impulse" to condemn the ethics of today,<sup>89</sup> failing to appreciate the positive attributes of contemporary ideas. Demonstrating the shortcomings of tolerance, as it is generally understood in Western liberal societies today, should not prevent citizens of the world from appreciating its important contributions. For example, considering the conceptual dilemmas already posed, one can, at the same time, benefit from the palpable limitations Rawls places on tolerance and a well-ordered society: namely, respecting the values of peace, a system of law legitimate in the minds and hearts of its members, and a respect for rudimentary human rights. These parameters, Rawls has concluded, "indicate the bedrock beyond which we cannot go,"<sup>90</sup> and, significant to this project, are important limitations found within and across the theological, philosophical, and juridical parameters of Western, as well as Islamic, civilization.

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## Discovering Islam

### A Taproot of Tolerance

Infuse your heart with mercy, love and kindness for your subjects. Be not in the face of them a voracious animal, counting them as easy prey, for they are of two kinds: either they are your brothers in religion or your equals in creation.

—*Ali ibn Abi Talib*

In order for the idea of the dialogue of cultures to become meaningful and to prevent it from becoming a mere slogan we have to begin intra-cultural dialogue in the world of Islam itself

—*Abdolkarim Soroush*

Unlike its nineteenth- and twentieth-century fate in the West, religion for the *dar al-Islam* has not been secularized. It has not been relegated and confined to the private sphere. For the majority of Muslims, religion, like politics, is inherently public; it permeates all facets of life: moral, political, social, economic, and cultural. On an individual and collective level, religion and politics are inseparable—and, in many cases, so are Mosque and State. As Bernard Lewis has stated, historically, Islam was both God and Caesar. The history of Islam illustrates how, prior to its initial encounters with secularism in the eighteenth century, the entire Muslim world embraced the idea that “the state was God’s state, the army God’s army, . . . the enemy was God’s enemy,” and “the law was God’s law.”<sup>1</sup> Religion was inextricably linked with the state.

Islam’s yoking of temporal and spiritual realms has facilitated Muslim endorsement of varying political systems over the past fourteen centuries. Islamicists like John Esposito importantly emphasize how Islam’s profundity of ideas and traditions gave credence over the past two centuries to a broad spectrum of political systems—facilitating diverse forms of governance, from dictatorships and monarchies to democracies and *Westernized*



republics.<sup>2</sup> Of course, while historically Islam has bestowed a boon to polities across the Muslim world, it has provided proof texts for razing ignominious regimes as well.

Plagued by the oppressive and coercive natures associated with both autocracy and militant, irreligious secularism, the Islamic world has revolted against both extremes searching for a faithful *via media*.<sup>3</sup> Contemporary history has borne this truth, as majority Muslim states have struggled to conceive a national identity that coheres with their faith tradition. Consider the following:

Perceiving religion's theocratic tendencies as the cause of geopolitical regression throughout the Muslim world, Turkey, under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's leadership, wholly embraced a laicized interpretation of the state, one that mimicked the French-Enlightenment construct of secularization.<sup>4</sup> Emerging from its brutal war of independence, Bangladesh in 1972, under the leadership of its founding father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (assassinated 1975), declared secularism to be one of the four immutable principles of the proud Bengali nation—only to have the term conspicuously omitted from its constitution a few years later under the military regime of General Ziaur Rahman (assassinated 1981). By 1988, General Hussain Ershad had unilaterally amended the constitution, instituting Islam as the official religion of Bangladesh—a country with an 11 percent Hindu population. In Pakistan, while still struggling with a thirty-year identity crisis and sociopolitical instability, the 1979 coup led by General Zia-ul-Haq—instituting martial law for the third time in as many decades—represented a climax to the proactive attempts underway in that Muslim country to rebuff secular, “non-Islamic” tendencies and, instead, reinforce a more intransigent interpretation of the original intentions behind Pakistan's creation. The Islamic radicalism suffusing the country today represents a continuation of this endeavor. Ayatollah Khomeini inspired an Iranian revolution against the corrupt and coercive secularism of the government under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. This new Islamic Republic, however, was far from republican, as it represented a new radical resurgence of Shi'i Islam into Iran's political system, becoming just as coercive and undemocratic as the regime it sought to replace. Syria, long considered one of the more secular Muslim nations, has been accused of dictatorial corruption and has confronted fundamentalist threats throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Today, the Syrian government is endeavoring to support and facilitate a moderate interpretation of Islam in order to forestall a rising fundamentalism within its borders.

In *The Universal Hunger for Liberty*, Michael Novak points out that, as a result of the coercive and authoritarian tendencies of the “secular” and

“countersecular” revolutions that have occurred within Islamic civilization, a “new generation of scholars” is materializing to “plead for greater humility and common sense on the part of both secular and religious leaders.” There must be a compromise between radical secularism and militant theocracy, argues Novak, where this “humility and common sense” are “the order of the day.”<sup>5</sup> In other words, a search for a religiopolitical median within Islamic civilization—between secularism and theocracy—is underway, and its success depends on those Muslims who embody the good judgment, humility, and contextual flexibility intrinsic to Islam. Novak echoes the beliefs of many scholars (from Muslim and Western cultures): “There has to be a middle way between militant theocracy and militant secularism. Humility and common sense must be the order of the day. As it happens, Islamic theology and tradition offer many resources for recovering that middle way, particularly when examined in the light of the modern scholarship in which so many Muslims are now quite learned and in the light of the sad experiences of the last 20 years or more.”<sup>6</sup>

Thus, even though Islam was used in various ways—right or wrong—to verify a spectrum of political systems, it is Islam that now offers the resources necessary to navigate successfully the turbulent strait between extremes.

This brief overture was intended to demonstrate the complexity and diversity of the Muslim world. In spite of its universal and borderless aspirations, the Muslim world is not monolithic. It has been influenced by a host of cultural, linguistic, historical, and geographical variables. Muslim advocates of humanism and literalism, traditionalism and modernism, reason and pure revelation, all claim authenticity in their depiction of Islam. In light of this great diversity and complexity, this project’s search for a cross-cultural conception of tolerance demands a critical examination of some of the rival interpretations competing for Muslim allegiance to determine if tolerance is an inherent Islamic ideal and if coexistence with the West is a task being appropriated by Muslim thinkers and communities today.

Is religious tolerance a universal idea or virtue? Do human beings have the right to coexistence? These are profound questions that, for many in the West, past and present, can be answered affirmatively. (Chapters two and three attempted to evince this conclusion.) And yet what about the Muslim world? How might Islam contribute to the discussion of lasting coexistence through a strategy of tolerance? Can a state dominated by a Muslim population and immersed in an Islamic culture embrace, through tolerance, the value of coexistence? This chapter offers a brief examination of some explicit theological and philosophical justifications opposing and supporting the measure of tolerance necessary for coexistence.

## **Tolerance: The Complicated Impact of Civil Society**

The lives of many Muslims are besieged by social, economic, and, political roadblocks imposed by autocratic Muslim governments and geohistorical exploitation. These depressed and often degrading circumstances, coupled with the perception of historical and modern injustices by the West, explain in part the entrenched animosity many Muslims hold against Western culture and its values. From this perspective, some within the Islamic world hold, without reservation, to the Qur'anic teaching that violence is to be preferred over oppression: "fight them [non-Muslims] until there is no more tumult or oppression and there prevails justice and faith in Allah but if they cease let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression."<sup>7</sup> Muslim extremists have exacerbated and profited from this inimically framed relationship with the West, often exploiting the emblems of Islam so as to legitimate various political interests.

For coexistence to occur, an equitable analysis of the place of tolerance, as well as intolerance, in Islam must be made. The suggestion that Western scholarly scrutiny of intolerance in the Islamic tradition be eliminated, as it may encumber contemporary efforts toward coexistence because of accusations of myopic Orientalism, merits caution. Indeed, a candid, balanced assessment of the intolerant and tolerant elements of Islam vying for Muslim allegiance is critical if greater understanding and a lasting coexistence are to be honestly achieved.

### **Fundamental Intolerance**

The term Islamism was popularized in the twentieth century. Martin Kramer, who has written extensively on Islam and Arab politics, explains how *Islamism* (as it is understood today) spawned from the French academe in the 1980s and continues to gain "even wider currency"—especially in the United States following September 11, 2001.<sup>8</sup> Islamism is broadly seen as coterminous or, at least, closely associated with alternative designations such as Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic puritanism, Islamic revivalism, and political Islam.<sup>9</sup> But what do these appellations mean collectively? Is one more appropriate than the other? These are not new questions; and answers diverge.

In a wide-ranging work, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, George Washington University professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr reminds his readers of the variety of Islamic revival movements taking place throughout Islamic civilization that are peaceful, local, and inwardly directed. As interchangeable locutions, Islamism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Islamic

puritanism represent a distinct category within modern Islamic revivalism that essentially typifies the more rigid (often coercive) puritanical movements that seek to reform wayward Muslim societies through more narrowly defined, mechanical interpretations of scripture and tradition and a strict, inflexible application of *shari'a*. Moreover, Islamists not only contest the invasion of Western ideas but also dismiss “the intellectual, artistic, and mystical traditions of Islam” as historical aberrations, antithetical to the Islamic way of life.<sup>10</sup> Another scholar of Islamic thought, Noah Feldman, offers an interesting insight into the essence of political Islam or Islamism. He discusses how in the twentieth century the adjective *Islamic*—made popular by the martyred Egyptian founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna—came to illustrate “Islam as a comprehensive worldview,” re-equipping the *umma* (Islamic nation) with an antithesis and sweeping alternative to the infectious and imposing worldviews of the West.<sup>11</sup> The rich, comprehensive understanding inherent in this adjectival form of Islam is the *sin qua non* of the Islamist and Islamism.

An extensive and multifarious movement, Islamism has come to symbolize the modern pan-Islamic antagonist to Western-imposed values and Western-supported Muslim governments, and it continues—in both violent and nonviolent ways—to motivate Muslims through such Islamic principles as justice, reciprocity, and obedience to God. For the Islamist, Muslims have a sacred trust to oppose those individuals, societies, and states that corrupt or challenge their “uncorrupted” *Islamic* way of life.

At any rate, for the expositive purposes of this chapter, acknowledging the characteristic complexity of Islamic tradition and the Muslim world, and the precarious pitfalls that surround all attempts to label behavior, *Islamists*, *fundamentalists*, and *puritans* will be used interchangeably and with circumspection to denote generally those Muslims and Muslim groups who seek to express Islam as an all-pervasive *Weltanschauung* that is intransigent to historical context, narrowly defined, often intolerant and truculent, and “in opposition to all that is non-Islamic.”<sup>12</sup>

The historical groundwork behind the theological obduracy of Islamism rests heavily with the conservative, revivalist interpretations developed by Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in the eighteenth century. A jurist and a scholar, Abd al-Wahhab was a Muslim “with intense religious conviction,” who is said to have committed the entire Qur’an to memory by the age of ten.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the Qur’an, along with the *hadith* and *tafsir* (Qur’anic exegeses), permeated much of his writing and were the building blocks undergirding his Muslim worldview.<sup>14</sup> In response to what he perceived as a pervasive corruption of Islam across Arabia, Abd al-Wahhab inaugurated what would become a conservative and inexorable Islamic

religiopolitical movement known as Wahhabism. Wahhabism would dismiss all competing interpretations—mystical, philosophical, or otherwise—as antithetical to the true faith, insisting on a doctrinal supremacy crafted from a literalist, simplistic, and exclusionary reading of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Flexibility in interpretation due to contextual contingencies was unacceptable, and inconsistencies in Islamic history were treated as an aberration to orthodoxy.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, one must be cognizant of the complex historical and social contexts of Wahhabism, which cannot be adequately encapsulated in this chapter. As with any movement or system of beliefs, context matters—and varying political and social settings have influenced the development and narrowing interpretations of Wahhabism. Natana J. Delong-Bas, an authority on Wahhabi Islam, makes this point well, emphasizing how “Wahhabism took on a more militant stand after the death of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in part because of historical circumstances, which resulted in different interpretations of his teachings.”<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the most instructive example of Wahhabism’s evolving, contradictory nature is evinced in Abd al-Wahhab’s position on jihad, which is “in marked contrast to contemporary fundamentalists, most notably Osama bin Laden.” In her incisive study *Wahhabi Islam*, Delong-Bas shows how the defensive nature of Abd al-Wahhab’s teachings on jihad is diametrically opposed to the offensive, bellicose, and divisive temperament of jihad espoused by such influential twentieth-century Islamists as Sayyid Qutb and al-Qaeda militants like Osama bin Laden.<sup>17</sup> While proponents of Islamism have all claimed to represent an authentic, timeless interpretation of Islam, the times within which they wrote and acted were not inconsequential to their thinking and behavior. Undoubtedly, individual and collective experience have influenced the growing intransigence of Wahhabism and the broader Islamist movement—and this narrowing, radicalizing process continues in earnest in the twenty-first century.

Muslim extremists like bin Laden claim to embody the essence of Wahhabi Islam. Yet, scholars like Delong-Bas, when juxtaposing the worldviews of bin Laden and Abd al-Wahhab, are reluctant to acknowledge his affiliation. When asked to comment on bin Laden’s fidelity to Wahhabism, Delong-Bas offered this response:

It is true that bin Laden was born and raised in Saudi Arabia and that he would have been exposed to certain Wahhabi teachings. However, his declaration of a global *jihad*; absolute division of the world into Muslims versus infidels; failure to respect the classical limitations of *jihad* that forbid the killing of civilians, women, children, the elderly, the handicapped, and religious leaders (including rabbis and monks); the destruction of property;

and annihilation of the purported enemy are not based on Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's teachings. Such a militant, extremist and intolerant vision of the world reflects a *jihadi* mentality and has no basis whatsoever in Wahhabism as it was originally taught.<sup>18</sup>

Political, socioeconomic, and ideological predicaments over the past three decades have accelerated the radicalization of Islamism, enabling its violent religiosity to usurp the fringes of such prominent "fundamentalist" umbrellas as Wahhabism.

In any case, the potency of the well-funded Wahhabi creed, espoused most clearly by the ruling House of Saud, has waxed and waned over the past two centuries, subject to the sociopolitical dictates of history, emerging in earnest over the last half-century as a formidable inspiration to many of the conservative and radical Muslim movements around the world.<sup>19</sup> The Salafiyah movement in Egypt and Syria, the Muhammadiyah movement of Indonesia, and the Jamaat-e-Islami of Pakistan represent twentieth-century movements that possess conservative perspectives similar to those of Wahhabism.<sup>20</sup> These movements seek to "re-Islamize" Muslim societies through strict interpretation of the *shari'a* (Islamic religious law) and staunch opposition to Western intrusion and unabashed dismissal of the more mystical and intellectual interpretations of the tradition.<sup>21</sup> Two twentieth-century Muslim thinkers who inspired a century of fundamentalism require brief mention. Their broad, multi-generational influence is evident in contemporary Islamic thought, providing a comprehensive (more intolerant) vision of Islam that most Islamist movements have since used to justify their religiopolitical causes and violent religiosity.

#### *Maududi on Tolerance and the Dawla*

Abul A'la Maududi (1903–1979) was the ideologue and "commander" (*emir*) of the Jamaat-e-Islami, a group that epitomized the *Islamic* worldview, opposing the modern liberal arguments put forth by some of Pakistan's early Muslim leaders. The Jamaat-e-Islami, established by Maududi in 1941, remains a highly organized and overtly political Islamist organization—and its ideological influences are no longer confined to Pakistan's political issues or borders. Maududi, whose influence extends well beyond the Indian subcontinent, has been called "the most systematic modern Muslim writer." His widely read works have been translated from Urdu into Arabic and English.<sup>22</sup> As one of the leading interpreters of Islam in the twentieth century, his impact on Islamic revivalism and fundamentalism is notable.

In Maududi's view, Pakistan's authenticity as an Islamic *dawla* (state) necessitated an active resistance to the temerity of Muslim reformers who embraced the "decadence" and "febrility" of the West—namely, "liberalism, secularism, and humanism."<sup>23</sup> Maududi saw no separation between Islam and the State; both religion and politics were inherently public. An Islamic state is guided foremost by the *shari'a*, where Muslim unity and the sovereignty of God are given juridical grounding. Maududi's prescriptive ideas for the *dawla*, while theocratic in nature, did not dismiss democracy as antithetical to Islam. "Islam and democracy are not contradictory to each other," he argued, "but the values of western democracy are not identical with those of Islam."<sup>24</sup> Democracy was possible for an Islamic state—but on its own terms. Unlike the popular sovereignty typified in Western democracies, an Islamic democracy—or what he termed *theo-democracy*—was rooted in "the sovereignty of God and the viceregency (*khilafah*) of man."<sup>25</sup> It is God who governs (as manifested in the *shari'a*), and the people, his deputies, are to collectively administer God's state through a sacred trust. Ruling an Islamic state was the responsibility of the entire Muslim community through *shura* (mutual consultation), and it required a government structure built on Muslim institutions as dictated by the *shari'a*. What is more, an Islamic state was to recognize a hierarchy of citizenship—Muslim above non-Muslim (*ahl al-dhimma*: see chapter five)—based entirely on religion. Thus, equal rights were not afforded all citizens, as religious affiliation determined the particular entitlements and privileges prescribed to each person and group.<sup>26</sup>

Maududi and his followers embraced an ahistorical, "literalist" reading of scripture in which the *shari'a* was intransigent to context.<sup>27</sup> In his narrowly defined conceptualization of tolerance, Maududi allowed for an imperialist interpretation according to which non-Muslims received protection by the state only after payment of the *jizya* ("tributary tax"), non-Muslim citizens were enjoined from proselytism and participation in the government, and only pious Muslims were to serve in government posts. In addition, any Muslim apostate was liable to execution.<sup>28</sup> While race, ethnicity, language, and nationality (not gender) were seen as beyond the limits of divinely ordained discrimination, a segregation predicated on religious identity was lauded as "the best and most just solution of the unusual complications arising out of the existence of a foreign element [non-Muslims] in the body politic of a nation or an ideological state."<sup>29</sup> Because non-Muslims symbolized a foreign (and potentially destabilizing) entity within the Islamic state, even this limited toleration was vulnerable to the whims of political and popular expediency. In his book *Islamic Fundamentalism*, historian Youssef Choueiri shows how Maududi's ideal

state was outside the bounds of his contemporary sociopolitical circumstances—and when expediency demanded, the “ideologue was quite prepared to waive his dogmatic pronouncements.”<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, while Maududi’s conception of a model Islamic state was made flexible to the political pragmatism surrounding Pakistan’s fragile existence, the rudimentary parameters of his “theo-democracy” still inform contemporary Islamist conceptions of the ideal Muslim nation. Maududi’s archetype remains an abiding aspiration of twenty-first century Islamism—it is one where “legislators do not legislate, citizens only vote to reaffirm the permanent applicability of God’s laws, women rarely venture outside their homes lest social discipline be disrupted, and non-Muslims are tolerated as foreign elements required to express their loyalty by means of paying a financial levy.”<sup>31</sup>

The equality of each individual and community is dismissed as antithetical to the spirit of Islam. Those Muslims who implicitly embrace the ideology of the Islamic state are to be considered “first-class” citizens, while all “others” who show obedience to the laws and customs of this ideological Muslim state are afforded a subordinate existence with commensurate privileges.<sup>32</sup> Such an ideological *dawla* espouses a highly circumscribed view of Islam and democracy that essentially precludes the realization of lasting coexistence through a meaningful, cross-cultural conception of tolerance.

### *Qutb and Jahiliyya*

The well-educated Sayyid Qutb (1909–1966) was an educationist, political dissident, and prodigious author<sup>33</sup> whose ideas and writings were clearly influenced by Maududi. As a consequence of personal and political circumstances, Qutb underwent a radical midlife conversion to Islamism, becoming its most impacting intellectual advocate in the twentieth century. He would join and eventually lead the politically and socially powerful Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>34</sup> Following years of persecution and incarceration, Qutb was accused of conspiring against the Egyptian government and executed by hanging. Over the last two decades of his life, Qutb would produce some of the most articulate and thoroughgoing explanations of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism.

For Qutb, the chasm between *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb* was deep, and a bridge of rapprochement was inconceivable.<sup>35</sup> Those communities—Muslim or non-Muslim—that failed to exemplify Islamic principles in all aspects of life fell outside the ambit of Muslim obedience and were labeled with the derogatory term *jahiliyya*. Noah Feldman comments on how this Arabic term, traditionally used to depict the “ignorant barbarism” of the Arab peninsula prior to the seventh-century arrival of Islam, seethes with



the oxymoronic idea of pejorative sympathy when referring to the abject existence of the infidel. One of Qutb's most significant contributions to Islamism "was to apply the idea of ignorant barbarism not only to non-Muslims who had never heard of Muhammad's call, but also states populated by Muslims who had neglected to make their state truly Islamic."<sup>36</sup> "There are two kinds of culture," writes Qutb, "Islamic culture, based on the Islamic conception [righteous way], and Jahili culture," which places "human thought as a god and not making God its criterion." Muslims, warned Qutb, must hold fast to the Islamic ideal, drawing from the divine source of Islamic culture and wary of imbibing "Western methods of thought," which will quickly "poison the pure spring of Islam" and pollute the essence of the Islamic conception.<sup>37</sup> Influenced by state persecution and repulsed by the greater Muslim community's opprobrious embrace of Western ideas, Qutb declared: "This [Westernization of Muslim societies] is the most dangerous *jahiliyya* which has ever menaced our faith. For everything around us is *jahiliyya*: perceptions and beliefs, manners and morals, culture, art, and literature, laws and regulations, including a good part of what we consider Islamic culture."<sup>38</sup> "All the existing so-called 'Muslim societies are also *jahili* societies," he lamented, "because their way of life is not based on submission to God alone."<sup>39</sup> For Qutb, Islamic revival was a zero-sum game, a cosmic dualism between the secular and the sacred: "There is nothing beyond faith except unbelief, nothing beyond Islam except Jahiliyya, nothing beyond truth except falsehood."<sup>40</sup> To appropriate any aspect of *jahili* civilization was to forsake the righteous way of Islam for the profane, worldly alternative.

What distinguished Qutb and the Muslim Brotherhood from Maududi was their greater flexibility (or, perhaps, general indifference) toward the external framework and procedures of the state. The technicalities of an acceptable Islamic political system would be contextually contingent, depending on the "time, place, and needs of the people."<sup>41</sup> Ahmad S. Moussalli, professor of political science at the American University of Beirut, captures this distinction, arguing that from Qutb's perspective, "the form of government . . . based on the principles of Islam is not of vital importance. In theory, it is a matter of indifference." For Qutb, regardless of its form of government, democratic or otherwise, "the goodness of the state does not depend on its institutions," but rather "on its underlying principles."<sup>42</sup> These underlying principles of Islam begin and end with the sovereignty of God and permeate all aspects of society, making Islam "an indivisible whole: its worship and its social relations, its laws and its moral guidance."<sup>43</sup>

Condemning what he perceived as Western self-absorbed preoccupations with materialism and consumerism, as well as a lack of humaneness, Qutb elevated Islamism as the only solution to forestalling further global degradation and for renewing the spirit and praxis of Islamic civilization: “Truth and falsehood cannot coexist on earth. When Islam makes a general declaration to establish the lordship of God on earth and to liberate humanity from the worship of other creatures, it is contested by those who have usurped God’s sovereignty on earth. They will never make peace. Then [Islam] goes forth destroying them to free humans from their power . . . The liberating struggle of jihad does not cease until all religions belong to God.”<sup>44</sup>

Although the Qur’anic declaration that there is no compulsion in religion has provided a precautionary stipulation against those who would coerce nonbelievers, Qutb tempers this protective measure of religious freedom by focusing on the Muslim obligation to destroy those secular opponents (*jahiliyya*) that contradict and challenge the Islamic way of life.<sup>45</sup> “Truth and falsehood,” he declares, “cannot coexist on earth.” His exegesis of Islam reaches an intolerant deduction; because those outside the *dar al-Islam* will “never make peace,” conflict between Islamic and non-Islamic civilizations remains interminable. For Qutb, the ethical foundations of Islamic thought cannot find commonality with contemporary Western worldviews; for that reason, Muslims must rebuff attempts by those in the *jahiliyya* to imbue the Islamic way of thinking with unauthentic and corrupting borrowings of the West.

Qutb emphasizes the inherent place of equality in Islam, its overarching concern for social justice and inward freedom of the soul. Indeed, Islam sought liberation from the tribal, linguistic, and ethnic partisanships of history, achieving a measure of human equality that historically eclipsed that of Western civilization. However, similar to Maududi’s way of thinking, while God has commanded human unity and equality, there exists a hierarchy of humanity based on a pietistic submission (*islam*) to God.<sup>46</sup> This privileged distinction based on religious membership in the Muslim nation (*umma*) effectively subjugates non-Muslims to an inferior status, making temporal equality impossible. What is more, Maududi’s influence is evident in Qutb’s practical strategy of *jihad*, which calls for non-Muslims who refuse conversion to pay *jizya* (unbeliever’s tax) as a token of their desire for peace and their awareness of the nonreciprocal freedom of Muslims to missionize.<sup>47</sup> War is justified against those who refuse such submission, as they are opposing God’s will and prohibiting all of humanity from experiencing the justice and tranquility that only come from an Islamic way of life.<sup>48</sup> Censuring those Muslim modernists who “want to

confine *jihad* to what today is called ‘defensive war,’” Qutb argued, on the contrary, that *jihad* was an aggressive striving to make the Islamic system dominant in the world.<sup>49</sup>

Qutb’s intransigence symbolizes the deleterious effects Islamic puritanism can have on cultivating a cross-cultural conception of tolerance for the sake of coexistence. Necessary tenets such as mutual respect, proactive engagement, real equality, and cross-cultural friendship appear to be unacceptable conditions of a perfidious human society and will only weaken Muslim efforts at reviving the Islamic way of life. If coexistence requires a cross-cultural strategy of tolerance, where individuals and communities endure the immutable—and often offensive—differences of others, while not refusing goodwill toward them as members of the human family, then for fundamentalists like Qutb and Maududi, coexistence, via tolerance, is inconceivable in Islamic thought. Instead, such perspective represents an irresponsible, Western way of thinking that must be avoided if Islamic civilization is to experience revival.<sup>50</sup>

### *Mechanical Interpretation of the Muslim Extremist*

The militant beliefs and actions of Muslim extremists frequently find motivation in the intolerant doctrines of the Islamist patriarchs and fundamentalist movements mentioned earlier. For instance, the deposing of *jahiliyya*,<sup>51</sup> called for by Qutb, is clearly a “harbinger of Osama bin Laden’s thinking” and central to the extremists’ call for Muslims to revoke their allegiance to any government or cause that strays from the way of Islam.<sup>52</sup> However, while recognizing their common desire to re-Islamize society and rebuff Western impositions through an inflexible interpretation of Islam, it is important to briefly delineate some of the differences between the radical, militant cast of political Islam—fueled by extremist groups such as the Taliban, al-Jihad, and al-Qaeda—and the more traditional forms of Islamism.

Though these two species of Islamism both inspire intolerant and intransigent interpretations of Islam, the variances between them are somewhat apparent. Traditional movements such as Wahhabism, although undoubtedly concerned about exploiting sociopolitical power as a way to assert their religiopolitical conservatism, are “distinctively inward-looking.”<sup>53</sup> That is, their concern about religiopolitical control does not generally extend beyond Islamic civilization. In *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, Khaled Abou El Fadl emphasizes how the distinctive inwardness of traditional fundamentalism is congenial to its compulsive preoccupation with traditionalism and fixation on Muslim conformance to ritualistic formalities.<sup>54</sup> In

contrast, the aspirations of Islam's radical Islamists are not limited to the Muslim world but include forceful, intercivilizational efforts to assert their uncompromising will on Muslims and the Other alike. Abou El Fadl highlights the belligerent tendencies of Muslim extremists: "As populist movements, they [militant Islamists] are a reaction to the disempowerment most Muslims have suffered in the modern age at the hands of harshly despotic governments, and at the hands of harshly despotic powers. These groups compensate for extreme feelings of disempowerment by extreme and vulgar claims to power. Fueled by supremacist and puritan theological creeds, their symbolic acts of power become uncompromisingly fanatic and violent."<sup>55</sup>

What is more, even though both traditional and militant varieties of Islamism find their solution to the social, political, and economic malaise of the Muslim world through a worldview of Islam that is infused with a "text-centered" particularism, its more extreme castes, unlike the earlier forms of conservatism, have made opportunistic use of modernity's benefits—"wholesale adoption" of Western technology—for the sake of acquiring power and affecting sociopolitical change.<sup>56</sup> Ironically, recoiling against the Western mantra of consumerism and materialism and modernity's assertion of universal human rights and duties has not precluded Islamism's "forward-looking" adoption of modern technology and propaganda for use against Western imposition.<sup>57</sup> Whatever the sociopolitical disparities between the various forms of Islamic fundamentalism, in general, there remains an overlying tendency toward a "normative particularism" that is manifested in circumscribed doctrines of debarment and intolerance.<sup>58</sup>

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Proof texts are proffered by Islamists to contest coexistence with the West and to advocate a general intolerance to lasting difference. The bellicose verbiage and actions of Islamic extremists clearly resonate with those passages that, in isolation, justify exclusion and intolerance.<sup>59</sup> They often refer, for instance, to passages which direct the Muslim "to fight those among the People of the Book who do not believe in God or the Hereafter, who do not forbid what God and His Prophet have forbidden, and who do not acknowledge the religion of truth—fight them until they pay the poll tax with willing submission and feel themselves subdued."<sup>60</sup> Mechanical readings enable Islamists to appropriate their exclusionary conservatism with such verses as, "O' you who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as allies. They are allies of each other, and he amongst you who becomes their

ally is one of them. Verily, God does not guide the unjust.”<sup>61</sup> Literal and ahistorical exegeses of such verses illustrate the baneful effects puritan interpretations can have on cross-cultural efforts toward coexistence. Read in isolation, “do not take the Jews and Christians as allies” appears incontrovertible, obviating Muslim support of proactive, respectful, and nonviolent engagement with Western civilization. This intolerant and circumscribed mold of Islam effectively forestalls, within the Muslim world, a wholesale tolerance of the Other for the sake of coexistence. For Islamic puritans, the Qur’anic injunction to “fight them [Jews and Christians] until they pay the poll tax (*jizya*) with willing submission,” clearly outlines a hierarchy of human existence and a subordinate dignity conferred on non-Muslims. Abou El Fadl explains this Muslim dilemma to coexistence, “The puritan doctrine is not necessarily or entirely dismissive of the rights of non-Muslims, and it does not necessarily lead to the persecution of Jews and Christians. But it does assert a hierarchy of importance, and the commitment to toleration is correspondingly fragile and contingent. So it is conducive to an arrogance that can easily descend into a lack of respect or concern for the well-being or dignity of non-Muslims. When this arrogant orientation is coupled with textual sources that exhort Muslims to fight against unbelievers (*kuffar*), it can produce a radical belligerency.”<sup>62</sup> Coexistence demands a cross-cultural commitment to tolerance. This commitment to tolerance must be expansive enough to include learning how to disagree without resorting to violence, an attitude of mutual respect, recognition of unqualified human equality, and an ongoing process of cross-cultural engagement. However, the theological orientations of Islam’s fundamentalists put forth an inhibited idea of tolerance that relegates non-Muslims to a subordinated existence, essentially dispelling the ethic of *caritas* and the posture of mutual respect critical for coexistence.

In spite of its pervasive influence in the Islamic world, some argue that the West has exaggerated Islamism’s potency and future impact. Iranian philosopher and professor at George Washington University Seyyed Hossein Nasr, along with other Muslim scholars, warns against Western tendencies, since the tragedies of September 11, 2001, to associate Islamic civilization, in its entirety, with “the violent nature of extremism in certain Islamic countries.”<sup>63</sup> In addition, Nasr cautions those who would encapsulate all Muslim efforts to regain or sustain Islamic values and symbols as “revolutionary and violent ‘fundamentalism.’”<sup>64</sup> Anthropologist Dale Eickelman reiterates this warning, arguing that indiscriminate labels such as “fundamentalism” reflect only one part of the Islamic story and inevitably

distract the global community from the profound spiritual and intellectual cultivation currently being realized across the Muslim world.<sup>65</sup>

Coexistence can only occur if a civilization's ultimate concern permits. Instead of circumventing the reality of illiberal and intolerant ideas in Islamic history and tradition, coexistence requires acknowledgement of their existence (without exaggeration), as well as recognition of the Muslim prerogative to contest the authenticity of those intolerant elements and encourage those irenic and tolerant elements of their faith.<sup>66</sup> Modern Muslim intellectuals such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, Muhammad Talbi, Fethullah Gülen, Muhammad Arkoun, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, and Abdolkarim Souroush cogently propose as much. They are exercising their right as vice-regents of God to advocate the tolerant principles of their tradition, which they believe symbolize Islam, while vitiating competing Muslim expressions of intolerance and violent religiosity.

### **Theological Foundations for Tolerance**

In his prospectus on religious liberty around the globe, W. Cole Durham, law professor at Brigham Young University, argues that within societies of greater religious homogeneity "cultural blindness" often plays a prominent role in obfuscating the need for protecting religious difference.<sup>67</sup> And, as Durham rightly concludes, such an obstacle can only be overcome "if there are grounds within a religious tradition calling for toleration of or respect for the rights of others to have divergent beliefs."<sup>68</sup> An abundance of resources approbating the tolerance of others certainly exists within Islamic jurisprudence and tradition. John Esposito, a scholar of Islamic Studies, highlights the existence today of a "cross section of Muslim thinkers, religious leaders, and mainstream Islamic movements from Egypt to Indonesia, Europe to America," who "engage in this kind of reformist interpretation of Islam and its relationship to democracy, pluralism and human rights."<sup>69</sup> Potent arguments from a host of Islamic scholars reveal how the concept of tolerance, although historically inconsistent, is a clear leitmotif percolating the scriptures and history of Islam.

A lasting solution toward a greater understanding of tolerance across the Muslim world is to be found not in such Western constructs as liberalism and secularism but in the root and fabric of Islam itself. Notwithstanding Turkey's complex and tumultuous body politic and Bangladesh's embattled civic identity, secularism—through "its association with dictatorial nationalism"—has been deemed largely incompatible for majority Muslim states, particularly in the Middle East and Indonesia.<sup>70</sup> In contrast, Islam has sustained repute as a viable source from which to mobilize justice and

challenge intolerant treatment of religious and ethnic minorities from both governments and society at large. Professor Noah Feldman encapsulates this capacity within Islam: “Like other religious traditions, Islam provides a deeply resonant vocabulary for criticizing government from the standpoint of morality. Muslim scholars, judges, and philosophers have long called for justice and righteousness in the name of Islam. When people in the Muslim world criticize their governments as being ‘un-Islamic,’ they are often simply calling those governments unjust, corrupt, and repressive.”<sup>71</sup>

Islam’s potency lies in the lucidity of its moral imagination, which holds magistrates and citizens responsible to one another and ultimately accountable to God.<sup>72</sup> Many Muslims today are revisiting and interpreting the wellspring of values inherent to Islamic tradition and jurisprudence. For Islamic law professor Mohammad Hashim Kamali, the *shari’a* epitomizes true human equality and justice, two moral elements that are “pivotal to the value structure of Islam.”<sup>73</sup> What one scholar said of Pakistani Muslims could be ascribed to Muslims in general: “No morality exists which does not find its ultimate sanction in Islam.”<sup>74</sup> Indeed, there is significant value in exploring Islam’s rich tradition of tolerance, explicating its humane conceptualizations and heartening examples. Of course, it is not this author’s purpose to determine the proper position of tolerance for Muslims; that is an interpretive question for Muslims to ultimately conclude. For that reason, the remaining pages of this chapter place primary focus on a diverse selection of Muslim thinkers and their diligent search for the roots and meaning of tolerance in Islam.

Can one discern a historically accurate, scripturally sound conception of tolerance from Islam? Or does Islam send mixed signals—is the evidence inconclusive? Professor Roger M. Savory has noted how an isolated reading of particular texts for religious tolerance or intolerance in Islam provides a seemingly inchoate message. While one may glean from some Qur’anic passages, such as “there is no compulsion in religion”<sup>75</sup> or “to you your religion and to me my religion,”<sup>76</sup> that Islam advocates a fair degree of tolerance, passages such as “take not the Jews and Christians for friends . . . He among you who takes them for friends is one of them,”<sup>77</sup> seem to discourage contemporary efforts toward coexistence.<sup>78</sup> However, recognizing these seemingly “mixed signals,” a closer look into the profound moral essence of Islamic scripture and tradition elucidates the distinct place for tolerance in Islam. Muslim scholar Khaled Abou El Fadl has done much to prove this conclusion.

Abou El Fadl challenges the intolerant readings of Islam by modern Muslim puritans, arguing that Islamists essentially disengage the Qur’an

from its historical context and moral imperatives of justice, kindness, gentleness, mercy, and goodness.<sup>79</sup> In contrast, he argues that a virtuous, contextual reading of the Qur'an reveals an inherent ethic of tolerance. For instance, quoting the Qur'an, Abou El Fadl writes: "If thy Lord had willed, He would have made humankind into a single nation, but they will not cease to be diverse . . . And, for this God created them [humankind]."<sup>80</sup> Here one sees the divine imperative to tolerate the temporal immutability of human difference. In another place, the Qur'an declares: "O humankind, God has created you from male and female and made you into diverse nations and tribes so that you may come to know each other."<sup>81</sup> Abou El Fadl maintains that the classical interpreters of the Qur'an, due primarily to a lack of expedient, contextual incentive, never wholly resolved this divine sanctioning of diversity and interfaith intercourse, leaving such possibilities of hospitable pluralism "underdeveloped in Islamic theology."<sup>82</sup> Although Muslims in the first two centuries of Islamic conquest did confront a sizeable non-Muslim population and the political necessity of religious tolerance (e.g., development of the *dhimma*), the rapid ascendancy of Islamic civilization—militarily, politically, and numerically—resulted in a Muslim world where the recognition and subsequent protection of religious diversity were of waning necessity and thus ideologically underdeveloped. However, as the first two centuries demonstrated, when confronted with a greater degree of religious pluralism and diversity, the idea of tolerance could be justified in principal by Muslim leaders and the Islamic state.<sup>83</sup>

Important to coexistence is the Qur'anic affirmation of God's authority to resolve all matters of disagreement, perhaps even offering non-Muslims the blessing of salvation: "Those who believe, those who follow Jewish scriptures, the Christians, the Sabians, and any who believe in God and the Final Day, and do good, all shall have their reward with their Lord and they will not come to fear or grief."<sup>84</sup> Regarding the religious Other, deference is given to God as the final arbiter of reward and judgment—the key role of the believer is not to pronounce judgment, but to show the correct "way." Further, a moral and contextual reading of the Qur'an, contends Abou El Fadl, illuminates the Islamic teaching of reciprocity. Muslims must succor and defend the Prophet and Islam against any threats from non-Muslims, but they must also acknowledge the distinctiveness and divinely sanctioned "moral worth and rights of the non-Muslim 'other.'"<sup>85</sup> It follows, then, that such terms as *jihad* (to strive or struggle—inwardly and outwardly—for the sake of Islam) are not imperialist and unlimited, but rather grounded upon the idea of reciprocity: "If your enemy inclines towards peace, then you should seek peace and trust in God."<sup>86</sup> Though



Islam encourages Muslims to make peace with those who seek peace, its ethic of reciprocity compels *jihad bis saif* (a striving through fighting) in cases of gross injustice and self-defense: “Fight in God’s cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression.”<sup>87</sup> Unfortunately, Islamists who frame a world of perpetual dualistic conflict between the *dar al-harb* and the *dar al-Islam* have harnessed this principle of reciprocity to justify a relentless, offensive agenda of violent conflict and intolerance against the Other. Of course, the incongruity of this worldview with the overarching moral probity of Islam is evident: if Islamists conclude that Muslims are in an enduring state of conflict with nonbelievers, and nonbelievers are “a permanent enemy and always a legitimate target,” then such Qur’anic passages directing benevolent reciprocity, restraint, compassion, and peace toward the Other must be discarded as null and void.<sup>88</sup>

An often-repeated verse, “There shall be no compulsion in matters of faith,”<sup>89</sup> is perhaps the clearest Qur’anic declaration for religious tolerance for the cause of freedom for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslim, Sudanese scholar Muddathir ‘Abd Al-Rahim writes how this “categorical statement” explicitly enjoins Muslims from forcible conversions. More than a sin, he warns, coercion “is also a crime punishable by *shari’a* law—the punishment under the Ottoman Empire being death, an injunction derived from the Qur’anic precept that ‘tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter.’”<sup>90</sup> What is more, Muslims are not only to forgo religious coercion of non-Muslims, but they are to extend kindness, compassion, and justice to them as well. “God forbids you not with regard to those who fight you not for [your] faith nor drive you out of your homes from dealing kindly and justly with them: for God loves those who are just.”<sup>91</sup> This Qur’anic passage teaches that obedience to Islam requires a proactive charity and justice to all “peaceful and law-abiding citizens” (Muslim and non-Muslim).<sup>92</sup> Unless direct acts of hostility are carried out against Muslims, relations with the Other should be characterized by goodwill and coexistence.<sup>93</sup>

Peace (in the midst of difference) is one of the most righteous and beneficent wishes for the pious follower of Islam. Even when reciprocating in self-defense against foreign aggression, “indiscriminate destruction” is prohibited. According to one report, when the Prophet Muhammad dispatched an army to rebuff foreign aggression, “he charged its commander personally to fear God, the Most High, and he enjoined the Muslims who were with him to do good [i.e., to conduct themselves properly] . . . Do not cheat or commit treachery nor should you mutilate anyone or kill children.”<sup>94</sup> From this perspective of Islamic tradition, no temporal circumstances ever relieve Muslims from the religious obligation of mercy and self-restraint. Emphasizing this Islamic injunction

toward righteous conduct, ‘Abd al-Rahim recites the instructions the first “Rightly Guided” Caliph, Abu Bakr, gave to warriors preparing to advance into Syria against a Byzantine army: “Do not commit treachery, nor depart from the right path. You must not mutilate, neither kill a child or aged man or woman. Do not destroy a palm-tree, nor burn it with fire, and do not cut any fruitful tree. You must not slay any of the flock or the herds or the camels, save for your subsistence. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them to that to which they have devoted their lives.”<sup>95</sup>

Thus, even during times of violent conflict with non-Muslims, within and beyond the realm of *dar al-Islam*, innocence was to be protected and restraint was expected. In this light, the savage terroristic strategies—making no distinction between combatant and noncombatant—now being used, at alarming levels, by Islamic militants appear utterly un-Islamic, a woeful aberration from the ethical trajectory of Islam.

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Numerous *hadith* (narrative reports of a saying, precept, or action of the Prophet Muhammad) demonstrate a congruity between the Qur’an’s directives toward tolerance and the Prophet Muhammad’s teachings and sayings. Muslims are taught that “one who forbids leniency closes the door to all goodness” and “be merciful to the inhabitants of the earth and He who is in heaven will be merciful to you.” The Prophet Muhammad instructs Muslims on how “mercy is not denied to anyone except to those who are cruel to others.” He again says, “One who is not compassionate, God will not be compassionate to him.”<sup>96</sup> An obedient Muslim disposition, then, encompasses such critical values as leniency, mercy, and compassion. A sixteenth-century addition to *hadith* literature declares the Islamic significance of a good disposition:

The believers who are the most perfect in faith are those who are the happiest in disposition.

A good disposition melts offences as the Sun melts ice

A good disposition is the greatest of Allah’s creations

He who has a good disposition will receive the same reward as one who has merit from fasting and prayer.<sup>97</sup>

A good disposition is not only an acknowledged virtue in Islam, but it is depicted as the *summum bonum* of the Muslim life, a consequence of fidelity to Allah. One finds a good disposition at the root of lasting coexistence. Islamist interpretations of exclusivism, extremism, and general

intolerance appear in conflict with the irenic spirit central to Islamic thought, tradition, and scripture. According to Kamali, the Prophet Muhammad taught that *din al-samahah* was a distinguishing mark of Islam that can be compared to three English nouns of similar meaning: magnanimity, generosity, and tolerance.<sup>98</sup> “Avoid extremism, for people have been led to destruction because of extremism.” This *hadith* demonstrates the Prophet’s aversion to fanaticism and doctrinal hair-splitting (*tanattu’*).<sup>99</sup> The Qur’an’s proclivity toward an embrace of tolerance is evident in its injunction to “hold to forgiveness, enjoin the good and turn away from the ignorant.”<sup>100</sup> Again, it teaches, “He who bears patiently and forgives—that is a sign of real resolve.”<sup>101</sup> In the Qur’an, forgiveness is rendered as an example of wisdom and spiritual maturity. Indeed, un-forgiveness is a tremendous burden to bear, as hatred of one’s “enemy” has a sullyng effect on one’s disposition; forgiveness, however, liberates an individual and helps cultivate a righteous resolve. Believers are taught not to impatiently challenge every conflicting issue but, instead, to tolerate (“bear patiently”) that which “emanates from ignorance rather than malice.”<sup>102</sup> Such instruction empowers Muslims to endure the immutable (and what they consider to be inferior) beliefs and practices of non-Muslims, grounding that tolerance on the Islamic precept to respect the nonmalevolent intentions of the Other.

At the heart of Islam is submission to God and an awareness of the model life of the Prophet Muhammad—an ideal Muslim life for which all believers should strive to pattern. The *sunna* represents a gathering of the way and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad for the purpose of illuminating the divine precepts of normative Islam. Following the Qur’an the *sunna* is the most important source for Islamic law. The *sira* represents a collection of traditions for the specific purpose of studying, biographically, Muhammad’s life.<sup>103</sup> Both the *sira* and *sunna* recount the following magnanimous sayings of Muhammad:

The three doors of good conduct are generosity of soul, agreeable speech, and steadfastness in adversity.

The generous man who is ignorant is more precious in the sight of Allah than the learned man who is miserly.

Generosity is one of the trees of Paradise. Its branches extend to the earth, and whoever seizes one of these branches will be raised to Paradise.

The most worthy of you is the one who controls himself in anger, and the most tranquil (forbearing) [tolerant] of you is the one who forgives when he is in authority.

The best of you are those who are best in disposition, who show kindness and who have kindness shown to them.<sup>104</sup>

From these familiar sayings one learns how the respect of human difference and the task of coexistence can be commendable values for Muslims. The kindness, generosity, benevolent speech, and endurance in diversity recorded earlier are all intentions of tolerance and requisites for coexistence that find cogency in Islam.

It is evident in the Qur'an and in numerous *hadith* and *sunna* that tolerance is co-dependent with other pervasive values such as compassion, generosity, restraint, equality, and justice. One of the ninety-nine names most often ascribed to God perhaps best demonstrates the tolerant and charitable marrow of the Islamic faith: "Most Compassionate." Muhammad Kamali concludes his analysis of tolerance in Islam by declaring that compassion and tolerance are the perfect attributes of God that humanity is ultimately called to embrace and reflect upon one another. For that reason, "tolerance and *rahmah* [compassion]," he declares, "become the most favoured of all attributes and they become characteristic of Islam itself."<sup>105</sup>

### Metaphysical Justifications for Tolerance

Political theorist Antony Black recounts how the Islamic world "was intellectually superior to the West in jurisprudence, mathematics, medicine, astronomy and philosophy until around 1200. Early Islam was more open than pre-twelfth century Christendom to foreign and ancient ideas."<sup>106</sup> An Islamic philosophical reformation of sorts began in the ninth century, with many Greek works on philosophy (Aristotle, Plato, Plotinus, etc.) and science (Galen, Ptolemy, and Euclid, etc.) undergoing Arabic translation. Al-Kindi (800–870), al-Farabi (873–950), Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980–1037), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes—"The Commentator") (1126–98) are some of the great Muslim philosophers who whetted the intellectual traditions of Islamic and Western civilizations.<sup>107</sup>

Despite its esoteric prominence from the ninth to eleventh century, philosophy played a precarious role in the mainstream of Muslim society. Until the eleventh century, theology and philosophy were infrequently interwoven, "regarded as two distinct disciplines," the former begotten from the Qur'an and *sunna* and the latter a beneficial but "foreign" gift from the Greeks.<sup>108</sup> Greco-Arabic philosophy provided a potent contribution to Islamic culture and political thought; yet the critical analyses of creation, ethics, and the state of being would remain the custody of the other didactic sciences: Islamic theology and jurisprudence.<sup>109</sup>

The historical debate between Muslim philosophers and orthodox jurists and theologians rested on the benefits and dangers of harmonizing *falsafa* (philosophy or rational discourse) with theology—and its potentially

diluting effects on the jurists' codification of divine revelation. Despite this concern, as Black points out, in their "basic structure and reach," the rational ideas of the Muslim philosophers were never antithetical to the principles of Islam; rather, they were conceived as a supplementary way to adorn Islamic understanding.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, few Muslim philosophers ever looked beyond the *shari'a* as the "one true moral Code."<sup>111</sup> For Ibn Sina and al-Farabi, for example, *falsafa* was simply a more effective epistemological method for conveying the truths of the Qur'an than that of the "crass popular narrativism of the Reporters and, indeed, Jurists."<sup>112</sup>

The philosophical tradition in Islam did embrace reason as an effective means, beyond religious dogma, to help solve moral dilemmas and address new situations.<sup>113</sup> But religious incredulity was rarely an issue, as few Islamic philosophers ever believed that revelation and rational inquiry stood in opposition.<sup>114</sup> Islam's great philosophers simply explored the "perceptible rationality" behind "Prophetic morality," convinced that all humanity could be intellectually persuaded—from both rational judgment and historical human experience—of the credibility of the *shari'a* as the final embodiment of morality.<sup>115</sup>

There is always a danger in attributing great thinkers of the past with modern sensitivities in order to address the circumstances of today. However, acknowledging this tendency, philosopher Paul Kurtz comments on how human communities "have always interpreted the past in the light of present needs."<sup>116</sup> Indeed, Muslims today are reexamining past Islamic thinkers in ways that speak to circumstances today. Islamic humanists today are embracing the rationalism and intellectual freedom espoused by Muslims in the past while commensurately devoted to the timeless postulates of Islam. Like their tenth-century counterpart, al-Farabi, modern Muslim philosophers are again employing reason and human experience, in conjunction with law and tradition, as critical epistemological tools for uncovering and expressing the Qur'anic message.<sup>117</sup> One prominent Islamic philosopher, whose rational works reveal an ethical theology that powerfully speaks to the contemporary need for coexistence, is Abdolkarim Soroush.

### **Islamic Humanism of Abdolkarim Soroush**

To the dismay of those Islamists who recoil against that cosmopolitan, rational spirit espoused by Islamic humanism, contemporary Iranian thinker and Shi'i philosopher Abdolkarim Soroush, in his *Treatise on Tolerance*, begins by paying tribute to the "soul of Erasmus," whom he describes as the "master of tolerance and pluralism."<sup>118</sup> To his conflicted

Muslim compatriots in a postrevolutionary Iran, where the “political asphyxiation” of *unorthodox* interpretations of Islam has forced many political and intellectual reformers into exile, Soroush states that one can live within a democratic political system where diverse opinions are freely expressed while maintaining fidelity to the normative values of Islam. Espousing democratic governance as wholly consonant with Islam, Soroush argues that neither tolerance nor government accountability to its citizens are foreign ideas to the Islamic tradition.<sup>119</sup>

Philosophically, for Soroush, Islam exposes the feebleness and imperfections of human beings, resulting in an attitude of intellectual humility. The humility that results from the recognition of human fallibility is a rudimentary motive for tolerance in Islam. To tolerate those who err becomes an effective means of expressing the virtue of humility. Referencing the celebrated fourteenth-century Iranian poet Hafez, Soroush concludes that human persons, each an inheritor of sin and each susceptible to Satan’s temptations, “can neither stake claim to infallibility themselves nor treat harshly others who err and expect them to behave like angels.”<sup>120</sup> Soroush challenges the imperious self-confidence of Islamists, arguing that those who are closer to the truth are more tolerant and humble than those who, through intellectual arrogance and self-righteousness, would forcefully impose their self-assured religiosity on others. Soroush’s Islamic humanism is transparent as he draws from both Western and Islamic thought, putting forth epistemological skepticism as central to understanding human limitations and the subsequent need for tolerance and humility.<sup>121</sup>

Moreover, reflecting on the Islamic mysticism of South Asia’s Mowlana Jalal-al-Din Rumi (Rumi), Soroush discusses the individual nature of faith. Rumi described religion, not as a sword, but as a rope that each person must freely take hold and, in Soroush’s words, yearn “to ascend, in order to climb out of the well of ignorance and conceit and glimpse the light of knowledge, magnanimity and kindness.”<sup>122</sup> The rope, symbolizing Islam, is without defect. However, its human expression depends on the individual who chooses to either ascend upward toward God or descend downward into the mire. Similar to Abou El Fadl, who argues that Muslims must approach the Qur’an with a certain measure of moral fortitude if they are to be morally enriched by the text of their faith,<sup>123</sup> Soroush contends that one must first rectify his or her intentions and directives before appropriating Islamic scripture and tradition. He explains, “Many are the people who have been deceived by the Koran and the Bible (and by religion, in general) because it is not enough for a book to be a book of guidance; the reader, too, must want to be guided; otherwise a totally humane creed can produce totally inhumane results in corrupt and sullied hands . . . There are people who

turn religions into the instruments of animosity and there are people who turn them into the instruments of kindness and coexistence. It depends on their ‘passion,’ which comes before religion and sits outside of it.”<sup>124</sup> Moral turpitude must be avoided, then, if one is to express through an ethical lens the authentic Qur’anic message and truly experience the Islamic way of life.

Soroush concludes his essay on tolerance by elevating Sufism as the pinnacle representative of tolerance in Islam. By piloting people in the direction of intellectual humility and unequivocal benevolence and rejecting deprecating power and avarice, Sufism has helped to temper human conflict, thereby stimulating coexistence. Arrogance has been deemed the greatest vice, breeding violence and isolation, while humility esteemed the greatest virtue, fostering tolerance of and coexistence with all humanity.<sup>125</sup> Thus, for Soroush, it is humility—or, maybe more accurately, meekness—that in the end justifies tolerance. Meekness is a potent virtue found within Islam (and Christianity) that may be likened to obstinate oxen that have been yoked by their master. Meekness represents our sinful and selfish natures harnessed in submission to the sovereignty of God. Perhaps it is on this volitional deference to the judgment and justice of God that tolerance finds its most stable and enduring foundation.

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Viable exegeses from a number of Muslim scholars have revealed how concepts of tolerance have converged from various shores of Islamic theology and thought to become a pearl in the sea of Islamic scripture and tradition. Still, Muslims today are left with a critical choice as they confront opposing interpretations concerning the limits, or abeyance, of tolerance in Islam. There is the Islam of al-Qaeda, an Islamism fraught with violent religiosity, militant intolerance, and uncompromising opposition to coexistence. Then there is the Islam of forbearance and peace, a religion that embodies the Islamic postulates of compassion, diversity, humility, friendship, and mutual respect. Lenn Goodman is right to conclude that both faces of Islam—intolerant and tolerant—provide “authentic” representations with clear historic foundations.<sup>126</sup> The future course that Islamic civilization will traverse is yet uncertain. Not unlike the West, an introspective, self-defining struggle is taking place for the marrow of Islam, and the lineament of Islamic tolerance is yet to be determined.

## A Diverse Sampling of Tolerance in the History of Islam

We should have so much tolerance that we can benefit from opposing ideas in that they force us to keep our heart, spirit, and conscience active and aware, even if these ideas do not directly or indirectly teach us anything

—*Fethullah Gülen*

The progress of Islam is better with the sword of kindness, not with the sword of oppression

—*Padshah Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur*

The Muslim world is not monolithic. Numerous Muslim communities are loosely conglomerated under the appellation of Islamic civilization. Differences between Muslim communities abound. While some have a history of quietism, others are inherently political. As in the West, violent struggles for power—in large part based on sectarian difference and geopolitical aspirations—have characterized much of Muslim history. In Islam’s inaugural century, those later labeled as Shi’i (a derivative of the expression *shi’at* Ali, meaning partisans of the fourth Caliph, Ali ibn Abi Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad), coordinated the assassination of Uthman, Islam’s third Caliph, in an effort to restore the legitimacy of the caliphate through the Prophet’s bloodline. The first civil war, between the fourth and last “Rightly Guided” caliph, Ali, and the first Umayyad caliph, Muawiyah, occurred within three decades of the Prophet’s death. This was the first of many civil wars between Muslim communities. The deep schism that persists today between Shi’i and Sunni (adherents of the “ways of the Prophet”) was cemented in 680 when the powerful army of the second Sunni Umayyad Caliph Yazid martyred Ali’s second son Husayn and decimated his cadre at the Battle of Karbala.



The Muslim world eventually fragmented into competing regimes, each vying for control of the *dar al-Islam* under the auspices of their particular Muslim interpretations of religion and politics. In the tenth century, for instance, the missionizing Shi'i Ismaili Fatimids in Egypt dawned as a formidable religiopolitical challenge to the Umayyads in Spain and the Sunni Abbasid caliphate. Overwhelmed by the thirteenth-century Mongol invasions, the legendary Abbasid Empire fractured permanently and was replaced by multiple military dynasties. The medieval Muslim regimes, or "Gunpowder empires," that ultimately materialized from this panoply of sultanates—the Mughals, the Safavids (Shi'i), and the Ottomans—struggled against one another, often intolerant of rival interpretations of Islam and distrusting of external, competing Islamic communities.

Power struggles and identity politics continue to play important roles in the contemporary Near East and South Asia—dividing Kurd from Arab, Arab from Persian, Persian from Azerbaijani, and Pashtun from Hazara—and regarding religious differences, we see the lines most clearly drawn between Shi'i and Sunni branches—which comprise the vast majority of Muslims in the Muslim world.<sup>1</sup> Sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shi'i continue in such places as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Iraq. The brutal violence that is riving a fractured Iraq is indicative of the deep sectarian divisions still resonating within the Muslim world. After the overthrow of Saddam and his regime, Iraq's constitutional assembly labored for many months on the structure of their new government. While the three major factions—Kurds, Sunnis, and Shi'i—all agreed that Islam would play a prominent role as a source of law, they remain violently disjointed on the issue of federalism and the devolution of national power. All three groups are Muslim, yet they are deeply divided—politically and territorially—in large part due to tribal animosities and interpretation of Islam.

In his thoughtful account of the complex Shi'i-Sunni schism, Vali Nasr makes the conspicuous and quite convincing claim that the pervasive vendetta between Shi'i and Sunni communities "is at once a struggle for the soul of Islam—a great war of competing theologies and conceptions of sacred history—and a manifestation of the kind of tribal wars of ethnicities and identities . . . with which humanity has become wearily familiar with." The future of the Islamic heartland, he asserts, "will be decided in the crucible of Shia revival and the Sunni response to it."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, although the Muslim world is united by the religion of Islam, in reality, it is a diverse and divisive array of societies and sects that have understood and experienced their Islamic faith in varied ways. Appreciating the heterogeneity of Islamic civilization, this chapter will analyze some of the various Muslim ideas and practices of tolerance that

occurred during Islam's fourteen centuries. In particular, it will examine how tolerance was expressed in the historical Islamic concept of the *dhimma*; the Ottoman Empire and its modern vestige, Turkey; and the Indian subcontinent's Mughal Dynasty and its modern inheritor, Pakistan. As with Western civilization, context matters. Historically, contextual variables affected the way in which Muslims conceived tolerance. Muslims continue to debate and disagree about the history, traditions, and principles of their faith and how these variables have influenced their conceptualization of tolerance. This complexity must be acknowledged if one is to appreciate the difficulties of encapsulating an Islamic imagination of tolerance for the sake of coexistence.

### **The Dhimma: Contracting Coexistence?**

One important historical example of early Muslim formations of tolerance was the *dhimma*. *Dhimma* was a perpetual covenant between Muslims and some non-Muslim inhabitants of the *dar al-Islam* that obligated the Muslim community to protect the property and welfare of those infidel communities on condition they pay the *jizya* (poll or protection tax) and avow their subordinate place in the world of Islam.<sup>3</sup> C. L. Cahen defines the *dhimma* as an "indefinitely renewed contract," whereby the Muslim community conceded "hospitality and protection to members of other revealed religions" under the proviso of their willing submission to Muslim authority.<sup>4</sup> While Zoroastrians were later included for basically temporal reasons (as well as Hindus on the Indian Subcontinent), the *dhimma* originally applied only to the *ahl al-kitab*, or "People of the Book" (Jews and Christians). While this idea of qualified religious tolerance of the Other officially emerged during the seventh century under Muhammad and the subsequent Caliphate period, the concept of *dhimma* was not implemented as an official state policy until the Umayyad Dynasty (661–750) in Damascus.<sup>5</sup>

The legendary "Pact of Umar" is traditionally recognized as the first formal, institutional arrangement of toleration between Muslims and the "People of the Book." The contract or *dhimma* created a subordinated "legal status of non-Muslim subjects" that was not dissimilar to the official discrimination instituted against the "non-citizen groups" in Byzantium.<sup>6</sup> The "pact" insisted, among other things, that non-Muslim communities refrain from public religious processions; from speaking Arabic, learning the Qur'an, or discussing the Prophet; from proselytizing or summoning worshipers through ringing of bells; and from displaying crucifixes in public. Non-Muslims were eventually proscribed from riding camels or horses

(limited to mules or donkeys) and forced to set themselves apart through wearing distinctive garb. These stipulations, of course, were malleable to context—the flexibility and stringency of discrimination against the *dhimmi* was always dependent on undulating local happenings and popular attitudes. The counter-obligation of the Muslim community was to respect the limited self-governance of the minority confessional community.<sup>7</sup>

In essence, the *ahl al-dhimma*, represented an elevated class of non-Muslims—above the idolater and below the Muslim—within the *dar al-Islam* who were permitted in varying degree to openly express their communities' religious beliefs and practices. While revolutionary for its time, the tolerance of *the ahl al-dhimma* was by no means absolute and clearly mercurial in nature. As already mentioned, the level of tolerance offered by Muslim authorities largely depended on the unique circumstances confronting local and regional Islamic leaders. Out of primarily temporal motivation, the *dhimma* was employed by Muslim conquerors for a plethora of reasons. Placating the overwhelming non-Muslim majority, for instance, was essential to preserving a young, rapidly expanding Islamic empire. The *dhimma* enabled Muslim conquerors to accord an anachronistic level of freedom and protection to their “religiously inferior” subjects while still officially categorizing them as second-class members of society. Moreover, this contract of tolerance helped the Muslim conquerors early on to benefit from the professional experience of the *ahl-al-kitab*, utilizing their expertise as civil administrators to ensure stable governance of the majority non-Muslim masses. This limited tolerance gave capable *the ahl al-dhimma* largely unfettered authority to administer the non-Muslim populations that dominated the empire early on. As history would show, however, such tolerance was often situational and always susceptible to change.<sup>8</sup>

History reinforces the duality of political expediency and religious principle that undergirded this historically high level of tolerance. As the Muslim population became numerically superior—through both conversion and conquest—the tolerance of *the ahl al-dhimma* became much more tentative, as explicit examples of discrimination toward non-Muslim minorities increased.<sup>9</sup> Jane Smith, professor of Islamic studies at Hartford Seminary, offers a succinct analysis of this capricious framework of tolerance:

The *dhimmi* status seems to have been a changing one, in that laws were made and either broken or forgotten, and relations between Christians and Muslims obviously were dependant on individual whim and personal advantage as well as on what was stipulated by the law. Although Christians and Jews were often in the ranks of the very wealthy, they were never free

from the whims of individual rulers who might choose to enforce strict regulations, or from the caprice of mobs expressing their passions in prejudicial and harmful ways . . . In general, the first Arab Muslim dynasty, that of the Umayyads, was fairly flexible in terms of its Christian citizens, but in Islam's second century the laws became more stringent . . . Through the Middle Ages there was a hardening of attitudes against dhimmis, due more to political than to religious reasons, especially after the period of the Crusades.<sup>10</sup>

A prominent historian of the Near East, Bruce Masters, echoes Smith's contention of hardening of attitudes, suggesting that the "heated counter-rhetoric of crusade and jihad" from the end of the eleventh century onward helped to excite the already combustible "interconfessional" arrangement in the Muslim world.<sup>11</sup> While the *dhimma* cannot be equated to modern juridical efforts toward intercommunal coexistence, it nonetheless symbolizes a degree of tolerance, unparalleled in its age, officially sanctioned through Islam, that generally exceeded that afforded to religious minorities in contemporary Christendom.<sup>12</sup>

Islam was the official religion of the Ottoman Empire, which controlled a region of the world where linguistic, religious, and cultural pluralism were fluid realities. A brief look at the treatment of *ahl al-dhimma* during the Ottoman period helps penetrate the complexity of this limited, yet significant form of tolerance. Bruce Masters contributes much to the understanding of tolerance under the Ottomans by way of his trenchant study, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World*, which chronicles such Ottoman cities as Aleppo, where court records and historical reports reveal that Muslims and non-Muslims cooperated effectively in various socioeconomic venues (especially in the city markets and trade guilds) without any blatant enmity and often spoke with a shared interest before the imperial courts. Still, intercommunal coexistence was always susceptible to the fickle behavior of the various religious communities, which ranged from sanguine cooperation to open hostility.<sup>13</sup> While the *ahl al-dhimma* were afforded a high degree of communal tolerance under the Ottomans, a concise discussion of judicial *fatawi* (rulings by Ottoman judges), as well as legal records from around the Ottoman Empire, show how societal stratification based on religious confession was an immutable reality—the Other was always inferior to the Muslim. For example, language used in the rulings issued by Ebussuûd Efendi (1574), who was highly respected as the chief justice or *Seyhulislam* of the Ottoman Empire, reinforced the public opinion that the Muslim community should remain separate from the contemptible and second-class *dhimmi* communities. Rather than the "legalistic, and value neutral, term *dhimmi*," Efendi favored the more derisive term of *kafir* (infidel) when referring to non-Muslim subjects.<sup>14</sup> In the

*dar al-Islam* (as in Christendom), equality between communities was never a viable alternative for coexistence. Although the *ahl al-dhimma* were granted a high degree of autonomy for maintaining “their own legal traditions, the right to property, and safety of person,” the social demarcation remained clear, as “non-Muslims had to accede to the social superiority of Muslims by doing nothing to disturb their peace and sense of well-being.”<sup>15</sup>

Confessional loyalties remained the foundation for identity in the Muslim world, “if for no other reason” than that “state, law, and tradition” necessitated a society divided by religious distinction.<sup>16</sup> Masters underscores the pliable parameters of the *dhimma*, showing, for instance, how religious classification was enforced much more stringently through *shar-i’a* in the cities than it was in the “thousands of villages where more heterodox religious traditions prevailed and the casual intermingling of people of different faiths was common before the hardening of sectarian boundaries in the nineteenth century.”<sup>17</sup> In spite of the contradictions surrounding the theoretical understandings, normative limitations, and practical applications of the *dhimma*, it is clear that freedom and security of the *ahl al-dhimma* were never indefinitely guaranteed. Informal cooperation and magnanimous interaction between Jewish, Christian, and Muslim peoples, easily interpreted as coexistence through tolerance, were subordinated to socioeconomic and geopolitical contingencies. Mutual respect, hospitality, and even friendship were often discarded in apprehensive situations of interconfessional conflict, “not only between Muslims and non-Muslims, but between Christians and Jews as well.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, though the *ahl al-dhimma* regularly intermingled with the Muslim community for political, economic, and cultural reasons, “as long as religion lay at the heart of each individual’s world-view, the potential for society to fracture along sectarian lines remained.”<sup>19</sup> As history eventually demonstrated, the dwindling Ottoman Empire would be forced to confront the potential of such a fracture during its encounters with the secularizing and expanding West in the tendentious nineteenth century.

### **Tolerance in Ottoman Turkey: Secularism on the Periphery**

Political theorist Michael Walzer writes that the multinational empire is the oldest form of tolerant regimes. Multinational regimes were heterogeneous, consisting of diverse self-governing or semi-independent religious and cultural communities.<sup>20</sup> Under such circumstances, stable coexistence—for purposes of peace and power—was the overarching impetus behind a ruler’s official tolerance of group difference. The Ottoman Empire—emerging in the thirteenth century and lasting into the early

twentieth century—certainly met these general criteria for a multinational empire and motivation for tolerance. The Ottoman Empire's official tolerance of group difference was carried out through its well-developed *millet*s. In essence, the *millet* was the Ottoman's modus operandi for systematizing the Islamic concept of the *ahl al-dhimma*. These *millet*s were largely independent confessional communities, segregated, not "according to their national or ethnic differences," but by religious identity.<sup>21</sup> Rather than isolating minority religious societies into "ghettos" or exiling them beyond its borders, the *millet* system, by granting conditional sovereignty to each religious community to govern its own members and traditions, enabled the Ottoman regime to experience longstanding unity and stability across its empire.<sup>22</sup> Jewish and Christian peoples coexisted with impunity as quasi-independent, self-regulating communities that professed political allegiance to the Muslim ruler. Through its *millet*s, intercommunal coexistence was realized, providing social cohesion and political stability to a multinational area of the world.

As with the *dhimma*, the tolerance afforded by the Ottomans should not be likened to equality, as non-Muslim communities were restricted to a lower-tier classification than that of the Muslim community. Bernard Lewis explains the parameters of this medieval Muslim tolerance: "This [tolerance] has sometimes been misrepresented in modern times as equality. It was not, of course, equality, and the very idea of such equality in a medieval society is absurdly anachronistic. The granting of equal rights by believers to unbelievers would have been seen, on both sides of the Mediterranean, not as a merit but as a dereliction of duty."<sup>23</sup> Despite its confessional diversity, the Ottoman Empire was a Muslim one—its juridical structure and cultural essence were inherently Islamic. Accordingly, a recognized religious hierarchy was seen as both warranted and expected; thus, Muslims maintained a superior status and the Other accepted its inferior existence.<sup>24</sup>

Modern parlance on the obligation of temporal authorities to secure individual freedoms and equality was not in the medieval lexicon of effective governance. Individual liberties were subordinate to the primary needs of communal cohesion and the common good. Communal solidarity was of paramount importance for the empire's stability and for the sake of group survival. For these and other reasons, an individual was inextricably associated with the religious, cultural, and linguistic particularities of his community—as Walzer put it, "everyone had to be a member somewhere."<sup>25</sup> Thus, Ottoman tolerance illustrates a historically high and persisting level of *communal* tolerance (as compared to its Western contemporaries), but tolerance of individual liberties within and across the various *millet*s remained historically unwarranted and theoretically inconceivable.

In the nineteenth century, as an imperializing West continued to unfold geopolitically, encroaching upon a “shrinking” Ottoman Empire, Ottoman reformers would gradually abandon the traditional *millet* system and, instead, pursue a more cooperative interdependence with Europe. They embarked on an “Europeanization” of the nation-state—basically supplanting the traditional understanding of Mosque and State with a “Western model of enlightened despotism.”<sup>26</sup> Niyazi Berkes writes of how, in order to facilitate an Ottoman solidarity that could effectively buffer Europe’s economic ascendancy and political expansion, reformers were compelled to pursue a trio of comprehensive measures: Muslim consolidation and unity, a synthesis of the *millets*, and modernization.<sup>27</sup> For the embattled Ottoman statesmen, safeguarding the state was paramount and, thus, the primary motivation behind the collective (and controversial) decision to pursue a modernized, quasi-European form of governance.<sup>28</sup> According to political scientist Ayse Kadioglu, it was the nineteenth-century Tanzimat (reorganization) Reforms “that shook the fundamental premises of the old Ottoman order” and symbolized the commonwealth’s desire for diplomatic and ideological rapprochement with Europe.<sup>29</sup>

The Tanzimat Reforms, beginning in 1839, altered the scaffolding of the *millet* system, which for centuries had officially elevated the Muslim community above non-Muslim groups. The highly controversial Reform Edict of 1856 sanctioned the disassembly of this institutional form of limited toleration, pledging “full equality to the non-Muslims.”<sup>30</sup> Islamic ideology, which had permeated and guided all societal institutions, was being rapidly upended by a secularization of the Ottoman state and the promotion and protection of the individual citizen—regardless of religion. Anthropologist Richard Tapper delineates how “the separation of religion and politics,” which characterized the secularization processes within the Ottoman system, allowed the state to ultimately supplant religion as the overarching source of unity.<sup>31</sup>

Weakened and fragmented in the previous century, following its defeat in World War I, the Ottoman Empire saw much of its remaining territory come under the control of the Allied powers. At the center of this dismantled empire was Turkey—the Ottoman successor to the heterogeneous regions of Southeast Europe and the Anatolian Peninsula. Turkish nationalists embraced the “Republican epistemology” that began with their Ottoman predecessors’ “encounters with the West.”<sup>32</sup>

Led by Kemal Atatürk, Turkish revolutionaries (Kemalists) in the early twentieth century endeavored to realize their Ottoman predecessors’ dream of an interfaith, cross-cultural system of values by embracing a modern, minority view of Islam that not only separated religion from the

state but replaced Islam with secular nationalism as the coalescence of the state.<sup>33</sup> These reformers placed the normative order of Islam under the control of individual Muslims, further secularizing the laws of the state. This new collective glue—republican nationalism—relegated Islam to the private sphere, officially outlawing the direct projections of religion into the political forum of the nation.<sup>34</sup> When the Turkish republic was officially established in 1923, the state took oversight of religion. Following the First World War, the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 gave official recognition to the Turkish Republic and formally ended the *millet* system, granting equality to all citizens regardless of race or religion.<sup>35</sup> Most significantly, “the copingstone of the edifice of legal secularism was laid in April 1928, when Islam was removed from the constitution.”<sup>36</sup>

Niyazi Berkes illuminates how this newly secularized nation established a historical precedent by demonstrating the ability of a predominantly Muslim country to embrace the governing principle of “popular sovereignty,” as well as the legal disestablishment of Mosque and State. According to Turkish nationalists, intercommunal unity and individual freedom of conscience would not be realized until the “theocratic concept” was removed. In light of this ideological and constitutional transformation, a major implication of the emerging sovereignty of the Turkish people was that tolerance of the Other through popular rule was no longer an epiphenomenon of politics but now a rudimentary principle for this majority-Muslim state.<sup>37</sup>

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In Turkey, as in any healthy democracy, impassioned tensions persist over rival visions of national identity. However, unlike Western democracies, Turkey is a Muslim state that governs through a military-emboldened secularism. Considering Turkey’s controversial embrace of various aspects of modern Western thought and practice, many within the Islamic world now view Turkey as a misguided state that succumbed to a heretical pursuit of militant secularism, an ideology that can never surrogate the traditional and deeply ensconced place that Islam had served for centuries. Acknowledging this concern, it is worth remembering, however, that Turkey is not merely composed of simple polarities—West (secularism) versus Islam—but, in actuality, is a periphery state that governs a citizenry variously committed to “both Islam and secularism, and indeed nationalism.”<sup>38</sup> While conflict between Kemalists and Islamists persist in Turkish politics and society, there is not a simple diametric opposition between secularists and Muslims, for many Kemalists and other supporters of a secular



state are devout adherents to a “privatized” Islamic faith.<sup>39</sup> However, notwithstanding the contested identities that characterize modern Turkey’s religious and ethnic mosaic, efforts to bifurcate society into “us” versus “them” or “secular” versus “religious” continue to occupy “air time” and headlines. While some are decrying the government’s “hostility” to Islam, others warn of a restive and encroaching Islamist presence in the halls of government. The early general election in 2007, called for by Turkey’s Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, shows the nature of this divide.

Secularists have long assailed the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK), led by Erdogan, for its religious conservatism and Islamist heritage. In 2007, after Erdogan proposed his foreign minister, Abdullah Gul, for the office of president, well over a million “alarmed” secularists flocked to the streets in protest—and to the surprise of few, the military dutifully expressed its displeasure with Erdogan and issued caution. Soon after, the state’s constitutional court controversially invalidated the presidential election. The underlying contention was with Gul’s (as well as Erdogan’s) past public support of Islamism and the fact that his wife openly wore the contentious Muslim headscarf. The election was quickly defined in zero-sum terms: Islamism versus secularism.

The overwhelming victory of the AK party in the subsequent election was not surprising and further illustrates the complexity of this morass. While many showed concern with the “public” Islam that permeated the ruling AK party, most were unwilling to overlook the stability and prosperity this “Islamist rooted” party has brought to Turkey. While the AK party has been duly cautioned, many have been reassured of its commitment to Turkey’s founding ideal of secularism. Some wonder, however, whether the AK party’s resounding victory is a testament of Turkish democracy or a growing recognition of religion’s immutable (and reemerging) place in Turkey’s public square. Only time will tell.

For the past half-century Turkey’s leaders and military have struggled to quell grassroots political and social expressions of Islam in public. Arguably, Islam’s influence perseveres, because decades of secularism have effectively neutered the normative and cultural identity that religion had provided Turkey for centuries.<sup>40</sup> Turkey’s *laïcité* has not, and will likely never, extinguish the efficacy of Islam in civil society, as the potency of its moral and unifying influences remain. Despite the obvious faults and shortcomings that have accompanied the rapid creation of a secular republic, Turkey remains a predominantly Muslim state that has been able to exist in relative peace, tolerating minority faiths and respecting religion’s ambit of influence in civil society as a prophetic voice and moral compass. Turkey has come up against a host of imperfections and challenges that

have accompanied its commitment to a secular republic;<sup>41</sup> nonetheless, indefatigable efforts continue within this Muslim state to achieve a balance between the public and private nature of Islam, while at the same time separating it from the temporal dictates and influence of the state.

### A Turkish Intellectual's Quest for Coexistence

A vibrant discourse on tolerance and the public place of Islam is well underway among Muslim intellectuals in Turkey. A product of the Turkish Republic, these intellectuals are somewhat of a paradox. While many work to criticize the tenets of secularism and the state's marginalization of Islam, they remain entrenched within a dialogue firmly grounded in modern thought. In other words, in their attempts to restore Islam as an alternative to Western, secular discourse and re-Islamize the way of life for Muslims in Turkey, they are utilizing the "polemical terrain of modernism."<sup>42</sup> For most of these Muslim intellectuals, the solution to societal, political, and human decline in Turkey can only be located in the pith of Islam. They challenge the West's oversimplified conceptions of Islam, which often imagine the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the twentieth century, as indicative of the tradition's inability to cope with modernity. Instead, as anthropologist Michael Meeker comments, for Turkey's Muslim intellectuals, "Islam is not traditional, conservative, or reactionary." Rather, "it is a religion for all times and places which stands outside of history."<sup>43</sup> In essence, these contemporary intellectuals are striving to equip Muslims with the instruments of their faith, enabling them to respond effectively to contemporary challenges of increasing pluralism, globalization, and cross-cultural engagement. One of Turkey's most prominent Muslim intellectuals deserves mention for the profundity of his work on intracivilizational and intercultural tolerance.

Fethullah Gülen, a prominent Sufi teacher and leader of the nebulous "moderate Islamic" community in Turkey, has gained a reputation with many in the country as a voice for tolerance and dialogue.<sup>44</sup> Recognizing the important role of Turkey's future leaders, Gülen is working to create "an idealist, activist, disciplined, and tolerant youth,"<sup>45</sup> who embrace an ethos of universal friendship that is obedient to Islamic principles and responsive to the cross-cultural need for coexistence. Representing a *via media* between strict secularists and those leaders and intellectuals who long nostalgically for a re-Islamization of society, Gülen has urged Turkey's Muslims to embrace the idea of an "Islamic Enlightenment," where Turkish people are open to ideas and technologies of the West, while at the same time seeking a renewed public charter for the traditions and values of

Islam.<sup>46</sup> He encourages obedience to a neutral state, arguing that Turkey's geographical location and demographic diversity demand a pragmatic and principled tolerance of human difference. Significantly, Ahmet Kuru notes how Gülen's idea of equilibrium between radical secularism and the more divisive, exclusivist interpretations of Islam is not a philosophy of expediency or compromise. Indeed, the *via media* that Gülen espouses does not require a dilution of what it means to be Muslim; rather, for him, it typifies the *way* of Islam.<sup>47</sup> To Gülen's way of thinking, Islam gives the balance needed in our global society: "Islam, being the 'middle way' of absolute balance—balance between materialism and spiritualism, between rationalism and mysticism, between worldliness and excessive asceticism, between this world and the next—and inclusive of the ways of all the previous prophets, makes a choice according to the situation."<sup>48</sup> Gülen's pragmatic, humanistic, and faith-based view of tolerance seeks to mediate the inexorable role of Islam in Turkey with the secular identity of the state. Islamic tolerance, for Gülen, is the balance bar necessary to steady humanity's walk on the exigent tightrope of coexistence.

In an effort to address global misconceptions about Islam, Gülen confronts the "false accusations" that Islam espouses an ethos of bigotry. On the contrary, he describes "real Muslims" as those who embody the magnanimous and benevolent ideals of Islam: "In the Qur'an, Sunna, and in the pure and learned interpretations of the Great Scholars there is no trace of a decree or an attitude that is contrary to love, tolerance or dialogue."<sup>49</sup> He points to such Qur'anic passages as "And if you behave tolerantly [pardon], overlook, and forgive, then God is Forgiving and Merciful"<sup>50</sup> and "Tell those who believe to forgive those who do not look forward to the Days of God; in order that He may recompense each people according to what they have earned."<sup>51</sup> Gülen implores Muslims to rebuff the negative image of Islam "fed to the world" and, through a strategy of "general persuasion," reclaim Islam's overarching message of love, dialog, and tolerance.<sup>52</sup>

In a speech recorded in 1996, Gülen stated that "tolerance does not mean being influenced by others or joining them"; on the contrary, "it means . . . knowing how to get along with them." For him, tolerance is recognizing and respecting lasting difference: "There have always been people who thought differently to one another and there always will be." Tolerance "does not mean foregoing traditions that come from our religion, or our nation, or our history; tolerance is something that has always existed."<sup>53</sup> Gülen is not reticent to embrace as wholly Islamic a conceptualization of tolerance that would effectively sustain coexistence through a charitable recognition of human difference:

We should have such tolerance that we are able to close our eyes to the faults of others, to have respect for different ideas, and to forgive everything that is forgivable . . . Even before the coarsest thoughts and the crudest ideas, ideas that we find impossible to share, with the caution of a Prophet and without losing our temper, we should respond with mildness . . . We should have so much tolerance that we can benefit from opposing ideas in that they force us to keep our heart, spirit, and conscience active and aware, even if these ideas do not directly or indirectly teach us anything.<sup>54</sup>

For coexistence to occur, such a conceptualization of tolerance must take root, a conception that recognizes the timeless reality of difference and the need for mutual respect, human friendship, and active engagement. As a citizen of Turkey, Gülen proudly lays claim to the historical roots of tolerance found in the Ottoman Empire's ability to maintain peace and stability within its multi-faith empire and facilitate coexistence with contemporary world powers. Gülen declares that if cross-cultural, interfaith reconciliation and peace are to be realized, Turkey must emulate its Ottoman progenitors and once again become a bastion of tolerance and coexistence to the world.<sup>55</sup>

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In the wake of the global "War on Terrorism," Turkey has been placed in a somewhat tenuous position—an East-West mediator of sorts. As a result of its geographical and ideological *via media*, it has experienced sporadic violence and intolerance from Islamists. In 2007 the brutal murder of two Turkish converts to Christianity and a Christian-German citizen in a Christian publishing office by five young Muslim Turks made world headlines. Disconcerting to many was one attacker's declaration that the attack was necessary to protect Islam and Turkey from the "enemies of religion." Notwithstanding this unsettling occurrence, writer Marvine Howe is right to conclude that, in general, "religious violence in Turkey cannot begin to compare with the vicious orgy of killings in Algeria or the deadly mass assaults in Egypt or the sectarian strife in Lebanon."<sup>56</sup> Turkey continues to mediate a divided world, contributing conceptualizations of tolerance that are able to permeate two competing worldviews. For some, it is a haven of tolerance, inaugurating a revival toward cross-cultural engagement and coexistence. For others, Turkey espouses a heretic's creed, inconsonant with the tenets of Islam.

Writing about Turkey and the Islamic periphery, and referencing Muhammad's famous Medina Constitution, Ozay Mehmet emphasizes how the truths of Islam, as Muhammad demonstrated, have always been

shaped to the contours of historical and sociocultural contexts, “which, unlike truth, change.”<sup>57</sup> Indeed, one must appreciate the impact of context if coexistence through tolerance is to be realized. Regardless of its seeming contradictions, Turkey is asserting its right as a part of the Muslim community to interpret Islamic texts and teachings that speak in a meaningful way to its unique historical and geopolitical concerns.

A discussion of the place of tolerance within the Turkish state was not made to offer the privatization of religion and culture as preferred or their public endorsement as the obstacle to the place of tolerance and coexistence with the Islamic world. In fact, Turkey’s ruling AK party demonstrates how governing antitheses such as secularism and Islamism have a tendency—borrowing philosopher Lenn Goodman’s phrasing—to “meet and often couple behind the scenes.”<sup>58</sup> Contemporary Turkish intellectuals like Fethullah Gülen, aware of Turkey’s geographical and ideological location between conflicting cultures, are recognizing the importance of common ground and moderation, confronting the obstacles that come with reconciling teleological arguments for a secular state with the well-ensconced principles and traditions of Islam. It is encouraging that even in the midst of a numerically superior Muslim population in Turkey, not currently confronted with a high degree of religious pluralism, Muslim voices advocating tolerance continue to resound. Although there is still much to be desired in the way of freedom and societal cohesion in Turkey, it offers an unusual patchwork of positive ideas and possibilities that demonstrate the Muslim capacity to achieve a relatively high degree of tolerance that is faithful to Islam and allegiant to a free society. So, despite its debated contradictions, it is possible to conclude that “extremism aside, . . . the Turks have achieved considerable progress in mobilizing nationalism, without abandoning Islam,”<sup>59</sup> conceiving conceptualizations of tolerance that merit closer consideration by those participating in the important dialog of coexistence.

### **Historical Role of Tolerance on the Indian Subcontinent and the State of Pakistan<sup>60</sup>**

Approximately 96 percent of Pakistan’s 157 million citizens are Muslim. Pakistan was constituted as a Muslim state; thus, its cultural center of gravity is Islam. The preamble to the 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan begins by proclaiming the universal sovereignty of Allah and the authority of the people of Pakistan to govern “within the limits prescribed by Him as a sacred trust.” Pakistan views itself as having a sacred trust, a divinely appointed responsibility to govern in accordance with the

values and guidelines of Islam. Article 31 of Pakistan's Constitution calls the state to succor Muslims, individually and communally, to live in accordance with the principles of Islam. Article 227 states that all existing laws must conform to the injunctions of Islam as stipulated in the Holy Qur'an and *sunna*. Article 228 establishes a Council of Islamic Ideology to help inform and enforce Article 227. And Article 41 requires that the President of Pakistan be a Muslim.

In reality, across Pakistan's historically brief and restless existence, Islam has been deployed as an expedient instrument, often harnessed for political, cultural, and social objectives.<sup>61</sup> Forayed by Islamic fundamentalists, this Islamic republic has succumbed to the social and religious pressures of Islamism, whereby religion serves a discordant role in facilitating rampant social and legal intolerance of secularists, Muslim moderates, and religious minorities. Since the army's chaotic siege of the extremist Red Mosque in Islamabad in the summer of 2007—inaugurating the regime's latest declaration to clamp down on violent religiosity across the country—bloody vendetta attacks have increased throughout Pakistan, and any modicum of stability in Pakistan's territorial rim—the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Area, in particular—has been largely effaced.

In addition to Pakistan's vehement contest over national identity, intercommunal intolerance in Pakistan remains problematic. Over the past two decades, hundreds, if not thousands, of people have been killed as a result of sectarian violence between Shi'i and Sunni communities.<sup>62</sup> In the past two years, dozens of doctors, clergy, and other professionals in Shi'i communities have been victims of targeted assassinations.<sup>63</sup> Decades of venal governance and subtle compliance with religious intolerance on the part of state officials have only delegitimized the state's place as legal protector of religious freedom. The Ahmadiyya Movement has been legally ostracized as an unacceptable aberration of Islam, and subsequent intolerance and persecution have resulted. Under Pakistan's Blasphemy Law (section 295-C of the penal code), desecrating the name of the Prophet Muhammad carries a possible death sentence.<sup>64</sup> Section 295-C of the Pakistani Penal Code states, "Use of derogatory remarks, etc; in respect of the Holy Prophet. Whoever by words, either spoken or written or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine."

Various human rights organizations lament that falsified charges of blasphemy against Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus, and even other Muslims are not uncommon.<sup>65</sup> The government's use of *hudud* ordinances, where

elements of Islamic law are compelled upon Muslims and non-Muslims alike (and non-Muslims are judged with lesser standards of evidence for violating Islamic law) is another example of religious intolerance and discrimination.<sup>66</sup> In this environment, such ambiguously adjudicated and sporadically enforced laws are often used as sociopolitical tools of oppression and intimidation.

While it does declare Islam as the official state religion, Pakistan's 1973 Constitution—indefinitely suspended since General Pervez Musharraf's 1999 coup—also proclaims the religious freedom of all citizens. "Subject to law, public order, and morality," Article 20 declares that every citizen has the right to practice and propagate his or her own religion, and all religious communities are entitled to establish, manage, and maintain religious institutions. Article 22 states that no citizen shall be coerced to receive religious instruction or take part in religious ceremonies outside of their own religion, and educational institutions that are maintained completely by a creedal community may offer religious instruction<sup>67</sup> From a constitutional perspective, religious freedom and tolerance are clearly called for. However, as discussed earlier, in practice such protections are chimerical. Although Pakistan's constitutional intention is to promote religious tolerance under the guise of Islamic law, in reality, gross intolerance of minority ethnic and religious communities continues unabated. When one examines the inimical and intolerant environment of this complex Muslim state, the question emerges: Can a state dominated by a Muslim population, Islamic in culture and character, embody, through tolerance, a genuine desire for coexistence and religious freedom?

As the rhetoric and behavior of Muslim extremists occupy world news headlines, the notion that Islamism and intolerance were the inevitable consequence of Muslim nationalism during Pakistan's creation is misconceived. The Muslim progenitors of Pakistan unabashedly espoused an Islam of tolerance. Through its trajectory of justice and morality, Islam was deemed the solution for peace and societal harmony. This notion is evident in the scholarly disquisitions of Muslims on the eve of Pakistan's creation and is emerging once again through brilliant and devoted Islamic scholars who champion Islam's innate compatibility with this fundamental concept. As Pakistan's spiritual forefather Muhammad Iqbal so often articulated, a government derived from Islam does not mean forceful coercion and subsequent repression. Instead, to work toward a universal and authentic Islam meant to mend our fractured world with Islam's universal aspirations of peace, justice, and equality. Moreover, this "Islamic ideology," championed by Iqbal and constitutionally proclaimed by Pakistan, was not merely bequeathed on the eve of Pakistan's beginnings or imposed

by an isolated hierarchy of elites.<sup>68</sup> Rather, as Professor Sharif al-Mujahid asserted, the ethical values enunciated by Islamic tradition were not part of a “new manifesto that the Pakistanis presented to themselves on the morrow of their freedom”; indeed, such values were “as old as Islam itself.” And many of the subcontinent’s Muslims were determined to realize a state that would “enthroned” such values.<sup>69</sup>

### **A Brief History of Tolerance under the Mughal Dynasty**

The conspicuous place of religious tolerance for the Muslims of Pakistan has deep historical roots on the Indian subcontinent. A tolerance of non-Muslims, although far from absolute, was demonstrated for centuries by some of the subcontinent’s Muslim rulers. The pinnacle of Muslim conquest on the Indian subcontinent occurred in 1526 with Babur and the Mughal Dynasty, representing “the end product of a millennium of conquest, colonization, and state-building in the Indian subcontinent.”<sup>70</sup> The success of the Mughal Empire is in part attributable to the unwonted degree of tolerance accorded to its sizable non-Muslim communities well into the seventeenth century. The prominent place of tolerance in the powerful Mughal Empire requires thoughtful consideration.

A juxtaposition of sixteenth-century Europe with sixteenth-century India reveals remarkable similarities between undulating cultural and religious climates that, for primarily pragmatic purposes, grew more tolerant of religious difference. In a world of divinely invested monarchs, the early Mughal rulers successfully governed their diverse Indian subjects via Islam’s normative framework and contextual flexibility. Al-Mujahid notes how, despite “an age of unbridled absolutism the world over,” the Mughal dynasty’s early Muslim rulers worked “to make their rule benevolent as far as possible in the circumstances obtaining at the time.”<sup>71</sup>

No doubt affected by the rich and variant cultural life of the age and region, the Mughals developed an anachronistic capacity for tolerating and accommodating non-Muslims. Babur’s grandson, Jalal-ud-Din Akbar, took up the herculean task of creating a unified, multi-faith civil society consisting of Hindus and Muslims—both Shi’i and Sunnis.<sup>72</sup> The effective administration and unification of his vast empire was achieved through a relentless conquest that was tempered with a broad conceptualization of tolerance and a mutual respect between “different religious creeds.”<sup>73</sup>

Undoubtedly, the Mughal’s founding emperor, Babur, whose proclivity toward tolerance was not unremarkable, influenced Akbar’s policies of ardent forbearance. On one occasion, Babur cautioned his son Humayun to ignore the quarrels of the Shi’i and the Sunnis, for therein rested the



fragility of Islam.<sup>74</sup> Babur counseled his successors, “The realm of Hindustan is full of diverse creeds . . . It is but proper that thou, with heart cleansed of all religious bigotry, should dispense justice according to the tenets of each Community . . . And the temples and abodes of worship of every Community under the imperial sway, you should not damage . . . The progress of Islam is better with the sword of kindness, not with the sword of oppression.”<sup>75</sup>

For Akbar (r.1556 to 1605), irenic policies toward religion were centered upon two distinct motivations: sociopolitical necessity and a humane spiritualism. First, religious toleration was politically pragmatic. The success of Akbar’s rule rested on the cooperation of the defeated Hindu princes and their numerous Hindu subjects.<sup>76</sup> Without placating the devout Hindu majority through adaptive policies and benevolent engagement, a sustainable Muslim reign would have been impossible. The immediate need to ensure a peaceful and sustainable empire was one, if not the most, important impetus spurring the tolerant policies of the early Mughal dynasty. Some of Akbar’s practical policies of tolerance, which exacerbated the growing acrimony of leading Sunni imperial jurists, are worth delineating.

In 1563, Akbar abrogated the collection of a high tax from Hindu pilgrims when they assembled for religious and cultural festivals. Lamenting previous misguided acts of forced conversion, Akbar ordered that Muslim authorities grant Hindus who had been coerced to follow Islam the freedom to apostatize without fear of capital punishment. In addition, in breach of the *dhimma*, Akbar permitted Hindus (non-Muslims) to refurbish or erect new places of worship.<sup>77</sup> Perhaps the most controversial and noteworthy act of religious equality occurred in 1579 when Akbar abrogated the *jizya*, or non-Muslim poll tax, which brought a sudden, symbolic end to a centuries-old social hierarchy that ranked Muslims above the religious Other.<sup>78</sup> Akbar’s radical departure from traditional Muslim treatment of non-Muslim subjects initiated, “for a time,” a degree of Muslim-Hindu equality that surpassed even that “which Jews or Christians acquired under the Ottomans.”<sup>79</sup> Such broad-swath policies of social and religious equalization directly impacted all non-Muslim subjects, making the common *dhimmis* acutely aware and appreciative of Akbar’s conciliatory and benevolent kingship.<sup>80</sup>

Second, and perhaps more significant to Akbar’s tolerant tendencies, was his “remarkable open-mindedness in religious and philosophical matters.”<sup>81</sup> The cosmopolitan nature of his disposition was formed through a variety of experiences and impressions.<sup>82</sup> Akbar’s principled epistemological quest was culled from a broad spectrum (Muslim and non-Muslim) of mystical and intellectual influences, from the Shi’i and Sufi mysticism that

infiltrated the royal court to the idiosyncrasies of local Hindu culture that he imbibed from his Rajput princess and Brahmin cohorts.<sup>83</sup> His mysticism, intellectual humility, and religious syncretism, coupled with the pragmatic need to foster beneficence and cooperation among the various Hindu and Muslim communities, created a level of religious tolerance that—when juxtaposed with any other contemporary Muslim or Western regime—was nonpareil.

A central theme throughout the various works in the advice-to-kings genre, written under Akbar and Jahangir, was the way in which Islamic political morality was best expressed through justice.<sup>84</sup> Akbar's close companion and advisor, Abu'l Fadl, instructed that justice must be achieved through civil equality and tolerance: "It is a prerequisite of . . . sovereignty that justice be administered to the oppressed, without distinguishing between friend and foe, relative and stranger . . . so that . . . those attached to the court may not make their relationship a means of oppression."<sup>85</sup> Nur al-Din al-Khaqani, a prominent theorist of Islamic thought and advisor to Jahangir, insisted that justice was the equivalent of universal tolerance (*sulahkul*).<sup>86</sup>

Akbar's imperial court made its desire for coexistence known: "It has been our disposition from the beginning not to pay attention to the differences of religion and to regard all the tribes of mankind as God's servants. It must be considered that divine mercy attaches itself to every form of creed."<sup>87</sup> Not only a mighty conqueror, but possessing unwonted administrative abilities, Akbar was a "far-sighted statesman" whose espousal of the principle of *sulahkul*, or universal tolerance, was an overriding reason for the successful development of a strong and peaceable empire that was humane and charitable.<sup>88</sup> History scholar M. D. Arshad summarizes well Akbar's legacy: "Akbar was unquestionably the greatest of all rulers of India of all ages. It was an age of great monarchs . . . but in many respects he surpassed them all . . . The secret of his success lay in his breadth of vision . . . Very early in life he adopted and practiced the principle of universal toleration when all the rulers of Europe showed fanaticism and intolerance towards rival religions . . . He built the political structure of the Mughal Empire . . . on the co-operation and good-will of all his subjects." Although Akbar's attempts to supplement orthodox Islamic jurisprudence and tradition with his mystical and syncretic affinities were gradually discarded and reversed after his rule, Akbar's son Jahangir (r. 1605–27) would continue to implement, in undulating degrees, pragmatic policies of coexistence.<sup>89</sup>

In spite of Akbar's religious tolerance and administrative genius, the demise of the Mughal Empire was inevitable, as the Sunni Muslim leadership grew increasingly indignant and inconsolable toward the Padshah's

equalization of “inferior” peoples. The reign of Akbar’s grandson Shah Jahan closed in 1658 with a bloody fratricidal war of succession that led to the violent ascension of Shah Jahan’s third son—the intransigent military leader, Aurangzeb. Expressing an inexorable piety (some would argue fanaticism) toward Islam, Aurangzeb brought the longstanding policy of religious tolerance to an abrupt end. Aurangzeb “embarked upon jihad against Hindu rulers” and once again reinstated *shari’a* law and the traditional *dhimma* on non-Muslim communities, establishing an orthodox judicial system built on Hanafi jurisprudence. Hindu temples refurbished or erected under Akbar were destroyed, and the oppressive *jizya* was restored.<sup>90</sup> The social stratification torn down under Akbar was hastily rebuilt under Aurangzeb—and one’s social and political standing once again depended on religious identity. Although the Mughal dynasty reached the apex of military strength under Aurangzeb, his rule was characterized with great enmity and distrust between the various communities, leading ultimately to the destabilization of public order and the dismantling of a once-coherent Mughal Empire. By expunging both principled and expedient practices of tolerance, the Mughal Empire, no longer able to project itself as centered on societal confluence and general human equality, was fast becoming “the empty shell of its formerly grand structure.”<sup>91</sup>

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Many are unaware of the exceptional degree of tolerance evinced in the Mughal Empire during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—unrivaled in other parts of the Muslim world or the West. For instance, the level of religious tolerance in sixteenth-century India far exceeded the policies of toleration realized through the heralded Peace of Augsburg in sixteenth-century Europe. The historic Peace of Augsburg granted German princes the freedom to choose (*cuius region, eius religio*), for themselves and their subjects, between Lutheranism or Catholicism—completely excluding Calvinism and the more radical Anabaptist sects. Although it provided a radical, precedent-setting alteration to the religious landscape of Europe, the parameters of such tolerance were far more confined than the nearly illimitable religious tolerance demonstrated by the contemporary Mughal dynasty.

As history painfully teaches, the more benevolent and tolerant monarchies, such as those of Akbar in Hindustan or, say, Sigismund II in Poland or Henry IV in France, did not guarantee future policies of tolerance in the Muslim world or Christendom. Nevertheless, in India, the indelible imprint left by the more benevolent rulers of the Mughal Empire historically

impacted the subcontinent's Muslims and generated an impulse of human equality and religious tolerance that affected future ideas and legislation.

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, under authority of the British crown, the Indian subcontinent had finally succumbed to the hardening of religious positions between Muslim and Hindu communities. Religiously and culturally, India had gradually reverted from a high and broad expression of tolerance to a more confined and territorial configuration, similar to Germany's limited Peace of Augsburg over three centuries earlier. Yet, 300 years after Akbar, there still flourished in India a moderate and irenic array of Muslims who remained loyal to an Islamic tradition of religious tolerance and human equality. Tolerant Muslims were not relics of a bygone age. They were readily apparent and active in nineteenth- and twentieth-century India, and they played an integral part in the conception and creation of Pakistan.

### **An Islam of Tolerance: The Muslim Intellectuals of Pakistan**

By the 1940s, Britain's prized possession, the Indian subcontinent, was slipping from its imperial grasp. Although historically accustomed to lengthy intervals of coexistence, the subcontinent's nineteenth-century social climate was characterized by increased communal tension under the pretext of religiocultural difference.<sup>92</sup> While Muslims warily perceived India being remade into a state for Hindus, many Hindus were worried about the political influence a significant Muslim minority would have on local and national governance—especially in the Bengal and Punjab provinces. Though the Congress Party under “Pandit” Jawaharlal Nehru and the All Indian Muslim League under the political guidance of Muhammad Ali Jinnah cooperated for a time, by 1940 a “two-state solution” was becoming an inescapable conclusion. The growing communal tension between Muslims and Hindus was only exacerbated by “the British colonial strategy of divide and conquer, which sometimes involved playing off Muslim and Hindu interests against one another to distract attention from British domination.”<sup>93</sup>

In an India wracked with animosity, distrust, and endemic violence between Hindus and Muslims, Pakistan's spiritual forefather, Muhammad Iqbal, reproved India's Muslim and Hindu religious leaders for propagating images of intolerance, casting the Other as the *bête noir*. Professor of Eastern Religions Ronald Neufeldt construes this idea well, describing how Iqbal challenged “both Brahmins and Mullahs” to demolish distrust and division and rebuild a civilization grounded upon benevolent coexistence.<sup>94</sup> Although Iqbal was a devout Muslim who clearly rejected Hinduism as

inferior to Islam, he did not hesitate to admonish his Muslim brethren for what he deemed to be an egregious betrayal of the spirit and values of Islam.<sup>95</sup> “Surely we have out-Hindued the Hindu himself; we are suffering from a double caste system, sectarianism, and the social caste system, which we have either learned or inherited from the Hindus.”<sup>96</sup> Iqbal believed that Muslims in India had yielded to an existence that was diametrically opposed to the principles inherent to Islam’s moral tradition. He called for both Hindus and Muslims to break from Western-derived concepts and, instead, reclaim the rich moral heritage they had ruefully neglected in their own cultures and belief systems.<sup>97</sup> Neufeldt states: “Just as Iqbal had counseled the Brahmin to recover the ideals of his own tradition, so much of his post-1908 writing [following Iqbal’s return from Europe] was written in the interests of calling Muslims back to the practice of the true ideals of Islam.” Iqbal believed that central to Islam was its emphasis upon justice and equality, uplifting the oppressed and empowering the powerless; these qualities stood in stark contrast to the caste system and sectarianism that plagued the Indian subcontinent.<sup>98</sup> Through their communal complicity in the sectarian vendettas and social discrimination rife in India, Muslims had shirked the charitable values inherent to Islam.

In Islam, the essence of *tawhid* (unity or oneness of God), wrote Iqbal, is expressed as an active undertaking in the human values of “equality, solidarity, and freedom.”<sup>99</sup> Islam as a body politic is merely the pragmatic way of manifesting the principle of *tawhid* as a “living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind.”<sup>100</sup> Thus, in order to restore the ethical ideals of Islam and the pure essence of *tawhid*, Iqbal entreats Muslims to “tear off from Islam the hard crust which has immobilized an essentially dynamic outlook on life, and to rediscover the original verities of freedom, equality, and solidarity with a view to rebuild our moral, social, and political ideals out of their original simplicity and universality.”<sup>101</sup> For Iqbal, freedom and human equality are not only a part of Islamic orthodoxy, but must remain for Muslims a critical aspect of orthopraxy as well. As such, tolerance becomes, for Iqbal, an invaluable agency for realizing these merited ends.

Iqbal did not advocate tolerance in a relative, postmodern sense. Iqbal never called for a dilution of communal identity for the sake of unity. Instead, he heralded India as a place of diverse languages, cultures, and religious confessions, where tolerance and peace had historically flourished.<sup>102</sup> In a 1932 address, as president of the Muslim League, Iqbal believed in the possibility of India “constructing a harmonious whole whose unity” could not “be disturbed by the rich diversity which it must carry within its bosom.”<sup>103</sup> For Iqbal, unity in India meant federalism, a country where

political power was shared between local and national governments, and cultural autonomy and the right to self-determination were protected.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, diversity was encouraged, and Iqbal advocated constitutional assurances that respected and protected the traditions and institutions of India's various religious communities.<sup>105</sup> In spite of such pronounced hopes by Muslim and Hindu leaders in India, with Indian independence from Britain an imminent reality, Muslims began to fear the growing socio-cultural solidarity of the Hindu people and the increasing marginalization of Muslims in Indian society. Toward the end of his life, Allama Muhammad Iqbal abandoned his hopes of intrastate coexistence with the dominant Hindu community and began vying for a two-state solution as the most peaceful means for tempering the national aspirations of both sides. The two-state solution sought to divide the subcontinent into two states—based almost entirely on religion—and its outcome would clearly illustrate the tragic consequences of the failure to coexist.

While Iqbal expected Pakistan to be a Muslim state, it is important to understand that when this Muslim intellectual aspired for a Pan-Islamism, or universal Islam, he was clearly calling for a revolutionary, benevolent humanism that transcended the inhumane barricades erected around religion, ethnicity, and culture.<sup>106</sup> Iqbal cautioned repeatedly that the idea of religion underpinning communal unity was only acceptable when based on a genuine tolerance and respect for the interests and beliefs of other religious communities.<sup>107</sup> For a Muslim, Iqbal taught that tolerance is neither a characteristic of weakness nor derived from temporal necessity. Rather, tolerance is a rudimentary attribute of a true believer as vice-regent of God on earth, whose view of human dignity beholds how “unbeliever and faithful are both created by God.”<sup>108</sup>

Understandably, many perceive Iqbal as the spiritual founder of the Muslim state of Pakistan. But more importantly, it seems, Iqbal stands as a champion of Islam—a champion of its peace, its mercy, its justice, and its tolerance. While one can effortlessly cull together a plethora of illustrations, perhaps Iqbal's irenic embrace of Islam's teachings of tolerance is most powerfully demonstrated in a simple rejoinder to Nehru: “True toleration is begotten of intellectual breadth and spiritual expansion. It is the toleration of the spiritually powerful man who while jealous of the frontiers of his own faith, can tolerate and even appreciate all forms of faith other than his own.”<sup>109</sup>

While some may struggle to systematize Iqbal's often contrary and complicated *weltanschauung*, one cannot dismiss his consistent opposition to forcible coercion and attitudes of intolerance.<sup>110</sup> Sir Mohammad Iqbal died in 1938, prior to the formation of Pakistan. In the months leading up to his

death, he was still urging reconciliation and religious tolerance for the sake of coexistence: “Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man . . . So long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God . . . the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialize.”<sup>111</sup>

In a “Father’s Prayer,” this Muslim father imparted these words to his son Javid: “The man of love, who sees men with God’s eye, loves heathen and believer equally.”<sup>112</sup> Muslim and non-Muslim were God’s children, created in his image and thus of infinite and equal value. For this reason, tolerance of otherness was countenanced for the higher purposes of coexistence and reverence for God’s design. Of course, Iqbal’s Islamic interpretation of tolerance and coexistence was not espoused in isolation. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, revered in Pakistan as the Baba-e-Qaum, or “Father of the Nation,” sought to inculcate—for political and principled reasons—just such an understanding in this new Muslim state.

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Muhammad Ali Jinnah was an astute and dexterous jurist and politician who guided the influential Muslim League and led the final push for Muslim statehood on the subcontinent. Jinnah was Pakistan’s Quad-i-Azam (“Great Leader”); Stephen P. Cohen describes him as “Pakistan’s George Washington, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson”—all wrapped in one.<sup>113</sup> Ali Jinnah espoused a religious tolerance that was inherent to Islam, envisioning the new Muslim state of Pakistan as a bulwark for religious freedom.<sup>114</sup> Quaid-i-Azam’s liberal conception of this new modern nation-state was unacceptable to many within the *ulema*, but Jinnah refused to accept any notion that advocated a Muslim state governed by clerics.

Complicating the debate, Jinnah’s political strategy, which mandated extreme flexibility in order to placate the dividing differences and interests of the various Muslim groups in India, was not well defined.<sup>115</sup> Through ambiguous political proclamations, he paved the way for the different Muslim groups to see Pakistan in a variety of ways: for the orthodox, a religious state; for the intellectuals, a place of cultural renewal; and for the businessman, a place of new, unfettered competitive markets.<sup>116</sup> Yet, in spite of his political vagueness, Jinnah was clear in his efforts to enshrine Pakistan as a place of coexistence, a place of equality, a place of justice, and a place where the personal faith of each individual citizen was assured. In a radio broadcast in 1939, Jinnah vocalized a religious tolerance that was cultivated from his Islamic beliefs: “If we have faith in love and toleration towards God’s children, to whatever community they may belong, we must

act upon that faith in the daily round of our simple duties . . . No injunction is considered by our Holy Prophet more imperative or divinely binding than the devout but supreme realization of our duty of love and toleration toward all other human beings.”<sup>117</sup>

The drafting and ratification of Pakistan’s first constitution did not occur in Jinnah’s lifetime, but he did experience the pressure from Islamic fundamentalists to appoint in the forthcoming constitution a religious leader to appropriate ministerial and executive powers.<sup>118</sup> In one of his last public speeches, Jinnah declared,

The Constitution of Pakistan has yet to be framed by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. I do not know what the ultimate shape of this Constitution is going to be, but I am sure that it will be of a democratic type, embodying the essential principles of Islam. Today they are as applicable in actual life as they were 1300 years ago. Islam and its idealism have taught us democracy. It has taught equality of man, justice and fair play to everybody . . . In any case Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic state to be ruled by priests with a divine mission.<sup>119</sup>

Jinnah concluded the address with a proclamation of equality: “We have many non-Muslims—Hindus, Christians and Parsis—but they are all Pakistanis. They will enjoy the same rights and privileges as any other citizen.”<sup>120</sup> The bitter struggle for the soul of Pakistan, the “new Muslim state,” had begun. As Stephen Cohen notes, Jinnah would leave this world dismayed at the antipathy and violence of Pakistan’s lamentable beginnings and at the bleakness of Pakistan’s future as a viable and harmonious state.<sup>121</sup>

Perhaps Jinnah’s idealistic words for a ruptured India can be delicately modified for application to Pakistan today: For redemption to occur, all Pakistanis “must offer to sacrifice not only their good things, but all things they cling to blindly—their hates and their divisions, their pride in what they should be thoroughly ashamed of, their quarrels and misunderstandings. These are a sacrifice that God would love.”<sup>122</sup> From the foregoing examination, it is clear that both Jinnah and Iqbal regarded coexistence through religious tolerance and genuine human equality as wholly consonant with the values of Islam and an absolute necessity for lasting coexistence.<sup>123</sup>

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Pakistan’s modernists were ultimately overwhelmed by an age of fundamentalism. Abu’l-A’la al Maududi (discussed in chapter four) and the Jamaat-e-Islami rose to prominence in India during the interminable



debates over the essence of a Muslim state. Maududi claimed, as discussed in chapter four, that it was impossible to separate religious life from political life, religious law from state law. Antony Black comments how Maududi “was the first major Islamic thinker” to categorically renounce the modernist agenda of enabling the *shari’a* to respond to “the modern world through a renewal of *ijtihad* [independent reasoning].”<sup>124</sup> At the opposite end of the continuum, Muslim intellectuals like Iqbal and Jinnah believed, as a matter of Islamic integrity, that the moral essentials of Islam, embodied in the unambiguous commandments of the Qur’an, remained unchanged, while everything else in the theologico-juridical Islamic tradition qualified as historically sensitive, and therefore responsive to *ijtihad*. The efforts of early modern Muslims to reopen the “Gate of *Ijtihad*” have enabled contemporary Muslim reformers to draw from this rich, complex faith in a way that positively affects rapprochement with other civilizations and facilitates progress toward the global desire for coexistence.<sup>125</sup>

Until the end of the twentieth century, the late professor, teacher, and acclaimed activist Dr. Eqbal Ahmad championed the importance of tolerance and human equality in Islam and his native Pakistan. He argued that Pakistan’s Muslim fundamentalists were “concerned with power not with the soul, with the mobilization of people for political purposes rather than with sharing or alleviating their sufferings and aspirations.”<sup>126</sup> Contemporary Islamists, he argued, seek to narrowly interpret Islamic scripture and thought, neglecting its rich moral tradition and the impact of historical context. The complexity of Islam, wrote Ahmad, threatens most Islamists “because they seek an Islamic order reduced to a penal code, stripped of its humanism, aesthetics, intellectual quests, and spiritual devotion.”<sup>127</sup>

After decades of constitutional struggles and dubiety, it seems that Maududi’s puritanical interpretation has vanquished the diametrical Islamic ideal of tolerance (promulgated in Pakistan’s latest constitution) only to assert a fundamentalism and religious intolerance that has characterized much of Pakistan’s precarious and praetorian history. Despite the rich Islamic heritage of human equality and religious tolerance on the subcontinent, Pakistan remains plagued by intra- and inter-communal violence, general intolerance, and rampant injustice.

Perhaps most disconcerting today is Pakistan’s seismic struggle for its national identity—its role as a “sacred trust.” Killings in the name of Islamic revolution continue. Rocket attacks and suicide bombings proliferated following the government’s bloody siege of Islamabad’s militant Red Mosque (Lal Masjid) in 2007. The embattled General Pervez Musharraf used the occasion to try and rekindle his government’s mandate, declaring, in no uncertain terms, his own war on terrorism: “We are in direct confrontation

with extremist forces. It is moderates versus extremists.”<sup>128</sup> In a televised address to the nation following the siege, Musharraf lamented the way in which Pakistan’s militant Muslims have strayed from the path of Islam. He then inquired of Pakistanis: “What do we as a nation want? What kind of Islam do these people represent?” “In the garb of Islamic teaching,” he continued, “they have been training for terrorism . . . they prepared the madrassa as a fortress for war.” He concluded that he “would not allow any madrassa to be used for extremism.”<sup>129</sup> The struggle for its identity as an Islamic state has been slated as a conflict between “us” and “them,” and democracy remains sidelined for the sake of security.

As security and democracy continue to elude Pakistan, the current regime goes on balancing the relentless pressures from militant Islamists and Western powers. The former are violently arrogating the religiopolitical authority to wage an Islamic revolution, while the latter implore Pakistan to rein in its radical element, bolster its moderate majority, and shore up its unwieldy NWFP and Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

Undeniably, the sociopolitical process of nation building in Pakistan has proven more difficult than ever imagined and has been compounded by six decades of war, martial law, corruption, and violent oppression. Yet, in spite of its tumultuous beginnings, Pakistan remains a potent laboratory for assessing the historical, ideological, and practical legacy of tolerance in Islam, espoused and experienced by Muslims for centuries. The Pakistan experience highlights the hard problems of and the promising possibilities for mobilizing tolerance as a pragmatic and philosophical concept that is wholly consonant with an Islamic worldview.

### A Complex Assortment of Ideas and Practices

This chapter has demonstrated how, historically, Muslims have charted multiple paths to tolerance. In the midst of Islam’s rapid expansion in the seventh and eighth centuries, most non-Muslims in the conquered territories experienced a higher level of tolerance and societal stability than under either Byzantine or Sasanian dominance.<sup>130</sup> The *dhimma* gave these non-Muslims an unfamiliar liberty to practice their different religions and the freedom to govern their own communities in exchange for submission to Muslim rule, symbolized through the tribute tax or *jizya*.<sup>131</sup> While such limited tolerance is deemed unacceptable by most today, this peaceful option proffered by Muslim conquerors (as opposed to the alternatives of brutal oppression or annihilation) represented an unprecedented level of systematic tolerance and limited coexistence, adumbrating early on the

Muslim potential for employing tolerance as an effective, faith-based strategy for achieving coexistence.

An honest historical assessment makes clear that the multinational Ottoman and Mughal regimes were in no way utopian. They were neither democratic nor republican in nature. Relinquishing absolute rule was never a consideration, and in spite of their recognition and accommodation of difference, these autocratic empires could be tyrannical if regime stability and imperial power were threatened.<sup>132</sup> What is more, tolerance was strictly communal in nature. Individuals were inextricable from their religious communities and thus susceptible to the often intolerant limits established by their own religious leaders.<sup>133</sup> Of course, until lately in history, collective identity was of singular importance in both Western and Islamic societies—individualism being a fairly new (or recently revived) idea. For this reason, the notion of individual tolerance was, for centuries, rarely desired or conceived.

While noting their similarities as multinational regimes, a juxtaposition of these two empires reveals significant differences as well. The Ottoman *millet* system was a well-established framework of segregated unity, where separate, self-governing religious communities united in their submission to the Empire. The *millet* system, however, was not neutral toward religion. Islam was the established religion of the Ottoman Empire and represented the apex in a hierarchy of religious identities. Non-Muslim communities were tolerated, but they were not equal. They enjoyed autonomy as second-class communities, always vulnerable to the political and social whims of Ottoman leaders and attitudes of the Muslim populace. As in the contemporary Ottoman Empire, non-Muslims on the Indian subcontinent were also susceptible to the vacillating policies of Muslim leaders and capricious mobs. However, during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Hindu communities achieved an anachronistic level of equality with their Muslim neighbors unrealized through the Ottoman *millets*.

The intellectual history of Islam also reveals the coherent place of tolerance in the values and expressions of Muslim thinkers and political leaders. Traditionally for Muslims, the divine injunction for justice was the centerpiece of morality and thus permeated nearly every conception of tolerance. In the “advice-to-kings” genre of the Mughal Empire, intellectuals such as Abu’l Fadl and Nur al-Din al-Khaqani interpreted universal tolerance as the pinnacle manifestation of justice.<sup>134</sup> Under Mughal patronage, Persian religious scholar Muhammad Baqir stated in the seventeenth century that justice, through limited tolerance (impartiality in judgment and protection of the weak), was required by an Islamic state, for nothing should be more important to a king than ensuring the welfare and peace of the people.<sup>135</sup>

Both Chapters 5 and 6 emphasize the intellectual and spiritual stimulants behind efforts of modern reformers to imagine an Islamic conceptualization of tolerance that recognizes the divine injunction for humaneness. Most significantly, Muslim reformers struggled to reclaim their right to reopen the “Gate of *Ijtihad*,” and thus restore to Muslim communities the use of faith-based reason to help address contemporary problems and situations. Scholar Ozay Mehmet comments how, for early Muslim reformers, Islam was not a stagnant system of absolutes but was also a “dynamic” and innovative faith, certainly capable of addressing the challenges of modernity.<sup>136</sup> A study of the history of Islamic ideas reveals how the role of *ijtihad* (self-struggle; independent reasoning), *qiyas* (analogy) and *ijma* (the authority of consensus in the Muslim community) emerged after Muhammad’s death as natural processes for Muslims to interpret the corpus of Islamic law in a way that spoke to new and changing situations.<sup>137</sup> It is these same Islamic sources that are once again empowering Muslims to confront—in fidelity to their faith—a world of increasing pluralism and civilizational conflict with a benevolent, faith-based understanding of tolerance that encourages greater humaneness, mutual respect, and meaningful coexistence. For Muslim reformers, then and now, *ijtihad* and *ijma* remain fundamental to achieving contemporary reform and coexistence.

Tolerance finds important roots in the teachings and traditions of Islam and in the history of Muslim civilization. It is a concept that Muslims have idealistically envisioned and historically developed. Much like the West, it is a term that has been distorted and authenticated through the moral and legal tenets of religion. As demonstrated, intellectual ideas and historical policies of tolerance are contextual; that is, they are relative to the unique circumstances and interpretations of those people immediately affected. However, as Michael Walzer rightly concludes, regardless of historical relativity, whatever framework for tolerance is conceived, it is only a “moral option” if it stipulates some variation of peaceful coexistence.<sup>138</sup>

Theologically, philosophically, and historically, Muslims have garnered Islamic strategies of tolerance for this end of coexistence. Though incentives of power and stability were central to the toleration instituted by early Muslim regimes, the mercurial concept of the *dhimma* and the enduring *millets* are both historical examples of Muslim success in achieving a relative degree of coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims. Although purveyed in a theologically “unorthodox” manner, Akbar’s broadly tailored policy of tolerance inaugurated a golden age of coexistence and exceptional religious equality on the Indian subcontinent. For over a century Muslims and non-Muslims were largely unfettered to exercise, nurture, and even

propagate their religious beliefs. In the twentieth century, the Muslim leaders of Turkey and Pakistan, Kemal Atatürk and Muhammad Jinnah, respectively, believed that the nation-state was a temporal vision of coexistence, and tolerance of otherness was an important strategy for achieving that image.

Certainly, when considering the Muslim history of ideas, one finds a host of Muslim reformers and intellectuals who have taught and are teaching tolerance as an Islamic principle necessary for coexistence. For Muslim intellectuals Muhammad Iqbal and Fethullah Gülen, true piety necessitates a spirit of tolerance and dialog. Human friendship and mutual respect are immutable attributes of God's vice-regents on earth. Contemporary scholar Muhammad Kamali would agree. As pointed out in chapter five, Muhammad Kamali exalts tolerance and compassion as those perfect attributes of God that humanity is enjoined to reflect in relation to each other. As well, Abdolkarim Soroush purports that intellectual humility, as counseled by his Islamic faith and Iranian culture, cultivates an attitude of tolerance and fosters a climate of nonviolent dialog and lasting coexistence.

Upon examination of a broad swath of Muslim ideas and historical experiences, it becomes evident that tolerance is a complex and underemphasized concept within Islamic civilization. Coupled with the numerous *hadith* and Qur'anic verses advocating the notion, the historical practices and intellectual ideas discussed earlier reveal the important roots this strategy finds in Islam. Tolerance, as a religious and political concept of Islamic civilization, much like the West, was sporadically utilized, always subject to the dictates of history. Yet, in spite of its distortions and inconstant application, it is clear that, for fourteen centuries, tolerance, in theory and practice, has been conceptualized and expressed by Muslims as a wholly Islamic ideal. This realization will hopefully deepen the current global discourse on tolerance and inspire and facilitate the cross-cultural search for coexistence between Western and Islamic civilizations.

# A Consensus for Coexistence

## Employing a Strategy of Tolerance

In today's multicultural world, the truly reliable path . . . to peaceful coexistence and creative cooperation, must start from what is at the root of all cultures and what lies infinitely deeper in human hearts and minds than political opinion, convictions, antipathies or sympathies: it must be rooted in self-transcendence.

—*Vaclav Havel*

**I**t is inevitable that a culture's mores, ethical norms, religious ideas, and political interests will, at some point, collide with those of the Other. While societies cannot completely eliminate such conflicts, citizens of the world continue to probe processes of mutual understanding and active engagement to help mitigate misunderstanding, animosity, and violence. This project looked at tolerance as an instrument for coexistence through a cultural-comparative lens. As stated in chapter one, any attempt to compartmentalize human beings—on any level—is charged with theoretical and practical limitations. Chapter one addressed the potential hazards associated with a cultural-comparative model, especially its proneness to generalize and misinterpret traditions and its tendency to neglect cross-cultural commonalities. As Khaled Abou El Fadl and others have pointed out, the binary, compartmentalizing framework of cross-cultural analysis does retain a propensity to misinterpret and confound the complicated, multi-level relationship within and between Islamic and Western nations. Thus, this comparative study proceeded with caution, cognizant of these snares. In fact, it is hoped this work has helped to endorse the rich multiplicity inside both Western and Islamic civilizations, showing how cultural and religious identity has been grafted to diverging geographical and historical

contexts, creating a collage of diverse traditions, languages, rituals, and ideologies within both civilizations.

At the same time, acknowledging important intracultural complexities, this work refused to dismiss the existence of inimical feelings and general animosity toward the Other—and the “us versus them” narratives that continue to cultivate intercultural divisions. A cultural-comparative study has provided expressly limited methodology for investigating points of difference and underlying motives for conflict, as well as creating possible cross-cultural paths to reconciliation and coexistence. This intercivilizational study was not intended to identify civilizational differences for the purpose of vilifying the Other. On the contrary, this study has shown how a cross-cultural paradigm provides one possible way to discern the importance of civilizational distinctiveness and cultural essence in a way that not only appreciates human difference but also reaffirms those moral precepts that transcend human divisions, thus revealing a common heritage of values across civilizations.

This concluding chapter begins by reasserting the reality of a complicated conflict between Islamic and Western cultures. Much of the relationship between Western and Muslim worlds continues to be characterized by an attitude of fear, animosity, and resentment, and the current dissonance between Western and Islamic civilizations is a reality that cannot be gain-said or simply dismissed as exaggerated or peripheral in nature. The global, intercultural wrangling in early 2006 over the publication of religiously offensive caricatures of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad is illustrative.

In September of 2005, Denmark’s *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper printed a series of cartoons that caricatured the Muslim Prophet Muhammad, suggesting that Islam was a faith imbued with intolerance and belligerence. One cartoon depicted the Prophet with a headdress resembling a bomb; another made the irreverent jest that paradise is running short of virgins for suicide bombers. By early 2006, the cartoons had instigated widespread protests and rioting across the Muslim world, as depictions (especially caricatures) of the Prophet or God are prohibited in the *hadith*. Further exacerbating this cultural clash, newspapers in Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Hungary, and Germany issued conspicuous reprints of the cartoons to show solidarity for the West’s treasured value of free expression. *Jyllands-Posten* apologized for the offensive cartoons but reasserted the legality of its actions. Other European papers, however, repudiated diplomatic suggestions to apologize for what is viewed by some as nothing more than cultural intimidation by the Muslim world. Serge Faubert, chief editor of the French daily *France Soir* stated that “it is not religion that is being called into question, but rather intolerance. Faiths are not being targeted, but the

outrageous intentions of some people who want to impose their commandments on those who do not share their beliefs.” In a show of unity with the former managing editor of *France Soir*, Jacques Lefranc, who was dismissed by the paper’s Egyptian-born Christian owner, the journalists of *France Soir* stated that “there is absolutely no question of stigmatizing Islam and Muslims. Religion is not the issue here but intolerance.” The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* cautioned against the ramifications of an apology for the publication: “It would be utterly disastrous if, under the pretext of ‘political correctness,’ something like a special duty to protect all or some religions were to be devised.” We must protect against “taboos on thought,” it warned, if we are to uphold a secular civil society. Lamenting an apparent double standard, Germany’s *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* stated, “It would be nonsense to regard the disparagement of Christian, Jewish, Hindu or other religious beliefs as an ‘opinion’ covered by free speech, but making fun of the Prophet as a deadly sin or crime.” Freedom of speech is “not negotiable,” it affirmed. The Czech paper, *Mlada Fronta Dnes*, described the latest ruction between Western and Islamic cultures as “a clash of civilizations,” blaming the protests on Muslim nescience of the immutable freedoms of Western civil society—namely, freedom of speech and press.<sup>1</sup> Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen placed the controversy at the center of Western democracy, arguing that the issue had escalated beyond Denmark and was being carried by extremists into a more precarious “global” realm of civilizational difference: a clash between Islamic proscriptions and the Western understanding of free speech.<sup>2</sup>

Objections from Muslim heads of state and fervid protests—many violent—quickly erupted throughout the Muslim world, from North Africa, across the Fertile Crescent and Arabia, and into the most populous Muslim countries of Indonesia and Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> The Syrian and Saudi Arabian ambassadors to Denmark were recalled, and the Iranian government severed trade relations with Denmark. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stated the freedom of opinion and press, “which we guarantee and respect, cannot be used as an excuse to insult sanctities, beliefs and religions.” Afghan President Hamid Karzai admonished those involved with the publications, cautioning that such insults against over one billion Muslims should never be repeated. Qatar’s daily paper *Al-Watan* warned that “European leaders should change their attitudes and remember that Islam has become the second religion in a number of European countries.” The deputy chief editor of Jordan’s *Al-Dustur*, Muhammad Hasan al-Tall, decried the inability of modern Western civilization to exercise its freedom of expression without “wronging the Prophet.” What took place in Denmark, he stated, “is not different from the attitude prevailing in



Western streets against Islam and its symbols.” A majority of Muslims expressed a collective concern over how the Western caricatures belie the Islamic faith, emboldening a perilous Western “Islamophobia” that presupposes a correlation between Islamic terrorism, which most Muslims detest, and the core values of Islam. Fehmi Koru, columnist for the pro-Islamist daily in Turkey, *Yeni Safak*, reasoned that “in today’s atmosphere, when minds are clouded by the ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis, the real danger that will spark a clash could be the perception that the West is attempting to attack the divine entities of Islam. The situation is rapidly being escalated to this level of tension.”<sup>4</sup>

Many in the West are somewhat stupefied by the collective outrage across the Muslim world, while Muslims, within and beyond Western civilization, stand united in their opposition to Western protections of such blatant provocations under the pretext of free expression. Many French Muslims perceive the European argument of free expression as disingenuous, as Muslims in France were denied such freedom of expression (wearing the *hijab*) in the public square. Both sides of this cultural conflict concur that the illustrations were indeed offensive. (The Western media generally agreed that there was no moral equivalence to the uncongenial cartoons in and of themselves.) However, the central issue of dispute concerned two treasured values of Western secular liberalism—freedom of press and freedom of speech—and the Muslim faith-based response to what is perceived as a blasphemous act purposely affronting Muslim beliefs and identity. Many Muslims lamented how the incident would only bolster the agenda of Muslim extremists, reaffirming Islamists’ claims of a corrupt and immoral Western media and their assertions that the Western-led war on terrorism is essentially a war against Muslims—a contemporary crusade to vitiate and vilify the “uncivilized Other.”

It is probable that the controversy surrounding the offensive publications, beyond a mere cultural clash, served as a meaningful outlet for expressing festering resentment associated with various political, economic, and ideological conflicts within and between states and regions. Yet, the purposeful republication and defense of the offensive cartoons by European presses and the violent protests throughout the world’s Muslim states and enclaves demonstrate a clear demarcation of worldviews. Even though many Westerners (including this author) lament the publications—calling them reprehensible and an irresponsible use of free speech—and many Muslims within and beyond the Muslim world condemn protests that have escalated into violence—describing such behavior as antithetical to appropriate peaceful protest and Islamic values—many in the Western and Muslim worlds still find it difficult to overemphasize the

lacunae of difference between cultures. A *Washington Post* staff writer, Philip Kennicott, ended his article entitled, “Clash over Cartoon is a Caricature of Civilization,” with seeming resignation: “So perhaps these cartoons really do crystallize why Islam and the West are incompatible and must hunker down for a ‘long war.’ The only other option, it seems, is to remember that if vastly different worldviews can find no accommodation on a subject, then perhaps it’s too early, in human history, to have the conversation.”<sup>5</sup> World religions scholar (and former nun) Karen Armstrong argued that the recent conflict revealed a “clash of two different notions of what is sacred,”<sup>6</sup> as both Western and Islamic cultures appear committed to determining what should be the appropriate ideological boundaries of the Other. Cultural identity lies at the core of this latest conflict, with Western and Islamic parlance escalating beyond vitiating rhetoric to cultural and religious provocation.

The latest collision between Western and Islamic cultures does not mean, however, that coexistence is unworkable. Coexistence between Muslim and Western worlds is a historical reality and remains a contemporary possibility. Chapter one discussed the different levels of engagement necessary for coexistence: (1) a mutual desire for peace and neighborliness, with Western and Muslim states constantly reassessing their geopolitical interests from the perspective of peace—seeking a benevolent engagement that accepts the struggles associated with balancing important territorial interests with the long-term agendas of peace, security, and mutual trust; (2) a high valuation of the Other as an equal member of the human family, worthy of dignity and respect; and (3) a persistent and thoroughgoing exploration of the unique and borderless values that flow from the veins of Islamic and Western civilizations.

Recalling Khaled Abou El Fadl’s discussion in chapter one of an inherent binary stimulant (the idea that within humanity lies a primitive incentive to cultivate an us versus them, good versus evil understanding of human communities), one sees how the various cultural conflicts today are befitting of the binary paradigm of reciprocal vilification of the cultural and religious Other.<sup>7</sup> While various contemporary “clashes” have been perpetrated through “vulgar” interpretations of Islamic or Western traditions, misunderstandings of the Other and the tendency to retreat to a binary arrangement for explaining cross-cultural dissonance and violence continue. However, Abou El Fadl notes how, in addition to humanity’s ignoble binary impulse the countervailing human predilection toward socialization—an instinctive desire to cooperate and proactively engage other communities and cultures—is equally inherent in the collective human conscience. He argues that “with a sufficient amount of overlapping interests,

interactions, and conscientiousness,” the primitive tendency to explain human existence as an “us versus them” can give way to a more humane understanding of the global human society that makes meaningful coexistence with the Other a real possibility.<sup>8</sup>

Temporal incentives of chauvinistic nationalism, political power and solidarity, economic development, and regional stability are only a few of the macro-variables that remain determinative in realizing peaceful coexistence. Religious and cultural intolerance remain primary power-based strategies for galvanizing majority consensus against local, regional, and international threats. Secularism, Christianity, and Islam are frequently harnessed to legitimize political, economic, and social initiatives that only exacerbate cross-cultural and interreligious tensions. In fact, it is often the case that expedient motivations at the local and global levels do not acquiesce to the principled value of coexistence and, instead, tend to provoke intercommunal disputation and violent conflict. Nevertheless, one finds difficulty in arguing that coexistence is not a transcultural goal worthy of universal aspiration. As Michael Walzer suggests, coexistence—cross-cultural peace and benevolent cooperation—is “always a good thing,” and is a desire that resonates in the collective conscience of humanity. Moreover, to argue or encourage the contrary is rarely desirable or justifiable in the realm of moral discourse.<sup>9</sup> This is doubtless the case with Western and Islamic civilizations, as peaceful coexistence finds widespread, cross-cultural endorsement.

Consequently, beyond addressing the volatile dynamics associated with competing world civilizations, a further proposal was to substantiate the prospect of realizing coexistence through the cross-cultural value of tolerance. There are a host of value-laden attitudes and strategies that have historically bridged the civilizational divide, finding intellectual and practical origins within both Western and Islamic traditions. This book has offered a nonexhaustive exposition of one such strategy, the intercivilizational concept of tolerance, revealing how this strategic attitude has transcended civilizational demarcations to address the sociohistorical realities, past and present, in a way that positively affects the meaningful endeavor to coexist. Coexistence is a mutually prescribed prospect, essential to peace and humanness, and, as this project has manifested, although coexistence will require a number of important strategies, its realization is largely predicated upon the transcultural and interreligious conceptualization and practice of tolerance.

### **Intercultural Significance of Tolerance**

This project has challenged the modern myth that tolerance is a new concept in the human lexicon of ideas. One of the most effective ways in which

to substantiate the cross-cultural coherency and historical relevance of tolerance is to demonstrate the endurance of its theoretical articulation and practical application in the stories of Islam and the West. A substantive purpose of chapters one through five was to disinter the historical trajectories of this important strategy across both traditions. In particular, chapters two and five examined the pragmatic applications and theories of tolerance across a wide ambit of Western and Islamic histories, respectively, demonstrating how the profundity of past conceptualizations might prove meaningful in the modern search for dialog, mutual respect, and cross-cultural coexistence.

Geopolitical realities certainly played a part in the writings and sporadic policies of tolerance in Islamic and Western traditions. Local context provided (and continues to provide) an empirical stimulant for conceiving tolerance as a pragmatic pathway to a peaceable society. In the fourth century, Lactantius acknowledged the immediate benefits of tolerance that came through Constantine's politically motivated Edict of Milan, which sought, via a communal tolerance of peaceable religions, to secure public order, receive divine favor, and engender unity across the Roman Empire. Likewise, as discussed in chapter six, the *dhimma*, which found its earliest expressions under the Umayyad Dynasty in the eighth century, quickly emerged in the early Islamic empires as a capricious but effective and practical framework of limited tolerance that afforded select communities of non-Muslims (originally the "People of the Book") within the *dar al-Islam* a high level of autonomy. The *dhimma* was originally conceived as a sociopolitical contract to placate the significant non-Muslim majority living under the suzerainty of a rapidly expanding Islamic civilization. Hospitality, security, and an inconstant, yet consequential degree of religious freedom were extended to the *ahl al-dhimma*, or *dhimmis*, to the extent that their second-class membership in society remained clear. (Such limited tolerance was not dissimilar to the qualified coexistence granted Muslims and Jews in Ramon Llull's thirteenth-century context on the Balearic Islands.)

Chapter five examined the high degree of tolerance (relative to its contemporaries) inside the multinational Ottoman Empire. While proclaiming Islam as the official religion, the Ottoman regime established the confining, yet anachronistic, *millet*s, which systematized the Islamic concept of the *dhimma*. Through its *millet* system, a circumscribed but lasting intercommunal, interreligious coexistence was realized, providing social cohesion and political stability to a religiously and ethnically diverse empire. While their policies lacked the ingenuity and longevity of the Ottoman *millet*, both Frederick II in Jerusalem and Alphonso the Wise in

Castile extended a pragmatic level of tolerance to non-Christian communities that approximated that of the Ottomans. While the varying tolerance practiced by different regimes suggests a historical relativism that informed their conceptualizations, these regimes collectively demonstrate how strategies of tolerance were effective and pragmatic means for ensuring the timeless, intercivilizational desire for peaceful coexistence. Infidel or *kafir* was indeed the most common reciprocal “insult” for Western and Islamic descriptions of the nonbeliever.<sup>10</sup> Yet, a religiopolitical policy of tolerance was readily available in both civilizations as an effective strategy for living peacefully with the *Other*.

For Jean Bodin, the restive environment of a religiously divided, warring France and the ethos of religious intolerance that pervaded most of Europe in the sixteenth century no doubt influenced his writings on the pragmatic importance of tolerance for achieving political order and national solidarity. A continent away, Bodin’s contemporary, Mughal emperor Jalal-ud-Din Akbar, also recognized the need for a broad conceptualization of tolerance in order to unite and rule a vast polyglot, multiethnic, interreligious empire on the Indian subcontinent.<sup>11</sup> Bodin died two years prior to the temporally motivated and provisional Edict of Nantes (1598)—a treaty that sought to end the protracted wars of religion in France by granting substantial entitlements to French Huguenots (revoked in 1685 when circumstances allowed). Akbar, however, realized the high degree of tolerance he espoused for the sixteenth-century Mughal empire, reaping the apodictic rewards of interreligious, cross-cultural coexistence—a realization that dissipated a century later under the oppressive intolerance of Aurangzeb. Expedient incentives of power and stability were transcultural variables that justified (or nullified) the important strategy of tolerance, and the different historical contexts of Muslim and Western regimes largely determined the degree to which coexistence and the interdependent strategy of tolerance were temporally advantageous.

Beyond the pragmatic realities of tolerance in Western and Islamic histories, this work also showed how tolerance was defended as a reasonable, faith-based strategy for achieving important transcultural and ecumenical virtues. Indeed, Islamic and Western cultures possess a canvas of mutual values upon which writings and policies of tolerance have been predicated. Moreover, this project evinced some important theological arguments for the divinely ordained importance of tolerance in the West (profoundly impacted by Christianity) and Islam. The theologians and theorists examined in this project conceptualized tolerance as a local necessity but with timeless application, engaging their particular historical context with the ageless moral imperatives of their religious and cultural traditions.

Liberty is perhaps the most far-reaching moral imperative of Western history. Lactantius, Ramon Llull, and Bartolomé de Las Casas all believed that a willing faith was paramount to an authentic faith, repudiating contrary efforts to coerce nonbelievers into accepting the true religion. People must embrace Christ's "gentle rule of their own free will," wrote Las Casas.<sup>12</sup> Twelve centuries earlier, Lactantius stated as much: "There is nothing that is so much a matter of willingness as religion."<sup>13</sup> Liberty has also been the lingua franca of modern Western liberalism, which reasoned that freedom of conscience is at the essence of what it means to be human. For most Western theories of tolerance, liberty has provided the pinnacle objective.

While liberty is a defensible goal within Islamic scripture and tradition as well—one recalls the Qur'anic injunction, "There shall be no compulsion in matters of faith"<sup>14</sup>—arguably the most influential virtue justifying Muslim conceptualizations of tolerance has been justice. Justice is interdependent with the Islamic principle of reciprocity, which calls Muslims to seek a mutual peace with the nonbeliever. Relations with non-Muslims should reflect goodwill, peace, and, even in cases of self-defense against hostile acts, mercy or self-restraint. Muslims are enjoined to defend the Prophet and Islam against any violent provocation, but justice requires that they also appreciate and uphold the divinely sanctioned "moral worth and rights of the non-Muslim 'other.'"<sup>15</sup> As discussed in chapter five, Akbar's close companion Abu'l Fadl reasoned that a faithful Islamic regime will pursue justice through civil equality and tolerance: "It is a prerequisite of . . . sovereignty that justice be administered to the oppressed, without distinguishing between friend or foe, relative and stranger."<sup>16</sup> Contemporary Muslim scholar Khaled Abou El Fadl challenges Muslims to reclaim the largely forgotten intellectual heritage of the *awlawiyyat al-Islam* (the priorities of Islam),<sup>17</sup> which would explain why the end for Muslims is not tolerance in itself but, rather, the justice it aspires to achieve.

While the hierarchy of values may differ between cultures, there is a confluence of important cross-cultural virtues underpinning both Western and Islamic conceptualizations of tolerance. A good disposition, for instance, has been redacted as a distinct characteristic of the virtuous individual in Western and Muslim writings. Las Casas described a virtuous disposition—imbued with charity, peace, and a rejection of worldliness—as a precondition to genuine missionizing. In their interreligious dialogs, Ramon Llull and Jean Bodin inculcated their interreligious participants with a benevolent disposition of civility and genteelness toward the Other. Tolerance, imbued with a spirit of cordiality and friendship, is readily apparent in Llull's *Gentile* as well as Bodin's *Colloquium*, as their learned and pious interlocutors sought to persuade and debate in an environment

of mutual respect and goodwill. In the same way, within the Islamic tradition the important *hadith* composed by Ala 'al-Din ibn Mutaqqi declared that "a good disposition is the greatest of Allah's creations,"<sup>18</sup> the *sine qua non* of the Muslim life. The Mughal Emperor, Babur, declared that "the progress of Islam is better with the sword of kindness, not with the sword of oppression,"<sup>19</sup> ascribing a benevolent disposition to the pious and obedient Muslim. In the *sunna* we found that three attributes of a good disposition were generosity of soul, agreeable speech, and steadfastness in adversity<sup>20</sup>—three important elements to Western and Islamic conceptualizations of tolerance.

Intellectual humility is also countenanced by both traditions as a commendable attribute of the tolerant individual. Humility or meekness pervades the charitable disposition of each participant in Lull's *Gentile*. The three learned men beseech forgiveness for any offense conveyed during the discourse, understanding that amidst a diverse humanity the discernment of truth is indeed "a process shrouded in difficulty and uncertainty"<sup>21</sup> and that a tolerant interreligious dialog, imbued with a spirit of meekness and intellectual humility, would remain a long-term requisite for coexistence. Contemporary ethicist and philosopher from the University of Texas J. Budziszewski emphasizes the interdependence of humility and tolerance, describing the tolerant individual as one who "refuses to indulge in himself the conceit that he can examine souls; he remembers his own proneness to vice and error; and at all times, he remembers that he himself is an object of tolerance to others."<sup>22</sup> In chapter four's discussion of contemporary Iranian philosopher Abdolkarim Soroush and Islamic mystic Mowlana Jalal-al-Din Rumi (Rumi), one sees the importance of avoiding religiopolitical arrogance and, instead, preferring the potent virtues of patience and humility, ultimately submitting one's sinful nature to the sovereignty and will of God. (Perhaps it is on this volitional deference—via intellectual humility and meekness—to the final judgment and justice of God that tolerance finds its most formidable interreligious foundation.) It appears that as much as anything else, achieving coexistence through tolerance must reflect a cross-cultural value of meekness, where self-righteous moralism is tempered with a mutual respect (not necessarily appreciation) of exogenous views that, through patience and humility, may, in fact, validate and even enrich one's own cultural and religious peculiarities.

Significantly, both traditions demonstrate the possibility of claiming an exclusivity of "truth" while espousing an inclusivity of the Other as a valued part of the human family. It follows, then, that the inherent worth and equality of humanity are transculturally meaningful stimulants for Western and Islamic conceptions of tolerance. Pakistan's spiritual forefather Muhammad

Iqbal envisioned a righteous believer as one “who sees men with God’s eyes” and “loves heathen and believer equally.”<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Las Casas found the equal ultimacy of each individual from within the all-important idea of the *imago Dei*—God’s creation of humankind in His own image. Western liberalism, following Kant and Rawls, has also upheld the equal nature of humanity as a primary motivation for theorizing a sustainable society predicated upon universal fairness.

A viable coexistence, a human rights regime applicable and enforceable across the globe, and international law respected by all peoples will require a borderless appreciation of the dignity and equality attached to each human person and community. In acceptance of the 1994 Liberty Medal, Vaclav Havel made this point well: “Politicians at international forums may reiterate a thousand times that the basis of the new world order must be universal respect for human rights, but it will mean nothing as long as this imperative does not derive from the respect of the miracle of Being, the miracle of the universe, the miracle of nature, the miracle of our own existence.”<sup>24</sup> The miracle of being is fully embodied in the values and belief systems of Western and Islamic cultures and provides a sustaining imperative for the strategy of tolerance. Indeed, an awareness and respect for the dignity and equality of the Other implores a tolerant spirit of otherness.

Perhaps most significantly for tolerance and coexistence is the historical recognition by Muslim and Christian scholars and theologians that, though they may desire a universal *umma* or religious *concordia*, a divinely sanctioned reality of lasting difference was and is the temporal context from which citizens of the world must seek to live peacefully. Conversion through noncoercive persuasion is commanded, but tolerance of difference is principally countenanced as well. Tolerance of the Other, then, is more than just a stopgap until uniformity can be reached or regained. In a world of immutable differences, it becomes a permanent mechanism for tempering conflict and encouraging coexistence.

It suffices to say that throughout Western and Islamic histories one can locate writers of tolerance who, undoubtedly affected by their historical circumstances, sought to harness the strategy of tolerance in an effort to achieve a variety of important virtues, such as liberty, justice, and humility, as well as the timeless and pragmatic motivation of peaceful coexistence. Applying past lessons and conceptualizations of tolerance are a boon of doubtless benefit to contemporary theologians, thinkers, and policymakers. In a world beleaguered with conflict over religious, ethnic, and cultural difference, one should not be opposed to marshalling old sources to help derive current solutions.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, Laursen and Nederman are right, citizens of the world must continue to “ransack the history of the theories and



practices of tolerance . . . in order to develop new tools for contesting persecution in its contemporary forms.”<sup>26</sup>

### **Conceiving Tolerance: A Contextually Relevant, Cross-Cultural Definition**

Throughout the history of Western and Islamic worlds, one finds persons who were profoundly affected by experiences of social, political, and religious division and searching for peaceful coexistence and a virtuous humanity. However, it should not be inferred from this project that tolerance was an even and ever-present movement or idea throughout human history. It was not. Rather, it was and remains a largely minority view or practice, often overcome by official and systematic policies of intolerance. The problem of intolerance has been one of the greatest and persistent predicaments in human history and is no less problematic today. Religion and culture remain ambient causes of violence, persecution, and division within and across Islamic and Western civilizations. Tolerance, as a religious, political, and philosophical concept found within both Western and Islamic traditions, was sporadically utilized, always subject to the dictates of history. Yet, despite its distortions and inconstant applications, tolerance, as demonstrated here, was, in theory and practice, an intercultural concept and experience, wholly consonant with Islamic and Western imaginations; and with cross-cultural, inter-religious violence an endemic part of the contemporary international landscape, the value of tolerance remains high.

This project showed how religious, cultural, sociopolitical, and geographical variables are a few of the many influences that have affected the various conceptualizations of tolerance. Accordingly, it would be a mistake to suggest the existence of one formulaic understanding of tolerance that has been unequivocally embraced throughout history by Islamic and Western cultures. Indeed, context matters, and the diverse framings of tolerance (and their infrequent implementation) make the development of a transculturally cogent definition arduous, if not impossible. Nevertheless, a primary purpose of this concluding chapter—beyond avowing tolerance as a viable transcultural strategy for coexistence between Islamic and Western civilizations—is to suggest a sustainable conceptualization of tolerance that accepts the indestructibility of difference while affirming the historical distinctives and cultural absolutes that make a community or civilization unique.

Recognizing the likelihood of lasting difference between civilizations is not to say that cultures are impervious to amelioration or that two-way,

cross-cultural dialog should avoid trying to affect positive change in the Other for the sake of promoting humaneness and coexistence. Thus, non-coercive persuasion and proactive debate are essential elements for bettering the human community and sustaining coexistence between Islamic and Western cultures. It is within this dynamic environment of vigorous discourse and abiding difference that a mediating and meaningful cross-cultural conception of tolerance is (with great humility) here proffered: Tolerance, for the sake of coexistence, requires both Islamic and Western civilizations to endure the immutable beliefs and behaviors of the contrary culture that they consider to be abhorrent or inferior to, or simply different from, their own, while not withholding the ethic of *caritas*—that is, charity, fellowship, and humaneness—to the peoples who convey those contrary behaviors and beliefs. This understanding of tolerance resonates deeply with Western and Islamic civilizations and symbolizes the benevolent and charitable tendencies of both traditions. Western philosopher J. Budziszewski offers a similar definition of tolerance as withdrawing approval from another's flaws while extending kindness toward their persons.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Khaled Abou El Fadl places benevolent reciprocity at the center of tolerance, as Islam directs Muslims "to support the Prophet of Islam" against his deprecators, while, at the same time, recognizing "the moral worth and rights" of those who conduct such offense.<sup>28</sup>

What is more, the conceptualization this author offers earlier emphasizes an important commonality of Islamic and Western theories of tolerance: the understanding that tolerance, at its core, is a product of judgment.<sup>29</sup> In the words of Budziszewski, tolerance "is not forbearance from judgment, but the fruit of judgment."<sup>30</sup> In essence, genuine tolerance is judgmental beneficence—reckoning the behavior, character, or beliefs of the Other as mistaken, inferior, or even offensive, while affirming the inviolable humanity of its bearer. The prominent and controversial Turkish Muslim, Fethullah Gülen, argued that "tolerance does not mean being influenced by others or joining them"; rather, "it means . . . knowing how to get along with them." It "does not mean foregoing traditions that come from our religion, or our nation, or our history," he explained.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Muhammad Iqbal repudiated the relative, postmodern understanding of tolerance, explaining how true tolerance is a product of "intellectual breadth and spiritual expansion," where the spiritually powerful person can tolerate other forms of faith while remaining jealous of the idiosyncrasies of his own.<sup>32</sup>

The idea of tolerance as a judgmental beneficence is a part of Western tradition as well, playing a prodigious role, for instance, in the interreligious dialogs of Llull and Bodin. The interaction of the religious scholars

in both the *Gentile* and *Colloquium* demonstrates how coexistence came, not through a dilution or compromise of absolutes, but through a tolerance that accepted human society's varied and complex religiocultural traditions, enduring dogmatic differences and respecting the sacred humanity of the Other. Likewise, Las Casas judged the paganism of non-Christians as antithetical and inferior to the truth, but he sought the willing salvation of the divinely created Other, not through warring and coercion, but through "a soft voice . . . with quiet argumentation and suitable language, with lively and lovely benevolence."<sup>33</sup> In both Islamic and Western traditions, tolerance has carried the idea of disfavoring otherness, while upholding the equal worth of the Other. That a subjective, benevolent conception of tolerance is intuitive to both Islamic and Western civilizations is significant, as contemporary coexistence will require a strategy of tolerance that can positively affect a global community of abiding difference without requiring an abandonment of absolutes.<sup>34</sup>

In order for this view of tolerance to remain useful, both Islamic and Western civilizations must find energy to employ this strategy from inside their unique historical, theoretical, and theological traditions. Moreover, they must percolate this mutual idea through a filter of universally accepted values such as human dignity, humility, liberty, justice, and peace. If tolerance is to become and remain an effective strategy for mediating current intercivilizational conflicts, it must be nurtured within a persistent and intensive cross-cultural process of dialog and engagement—listening and learning how to live with real and lasting difference.

### **Contemporary Challenges to Tolerance and Coexistence**

When the question is asked, "Is tolerance a cross-cultural possibility?" the answer is not immediately obvious. Many in the West continue to perceive the Muslim world as opposed to coexistence and Islam as a religion devoid of tolerance. The terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists in New York, Madrid, London, Amsterdam, and Glasgow, as well as the way in which many of the protests against the European publications of offensive cartoons degenerated into acts of violence and bitter diatribes across the Muslim world, are, for many Westerners, evidence of an intolerant Islamic culture. Moreover, the violent invectives from such Muslim extremists as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who stated at the execution of Nicholas Berg, "So kill the infidels wherever you see them, take them, sanction them, and await them in every place," represent what Abou El Fadl terms "vulgarizations of Islam." Yet, despite their perversions, the voices of Muslim extremists continue to dominate the inchoate perceptions created by many

Westerners of what Islamic culture espouses. The intransigency of extremists like Zarqawi, Osama Bin Laden, or Britain's Abu Hamza al-Masri belies the humane and benevolent tradition they claim to represent, a rueful example of how context often obfuscates authenticity. As demonstrated in chapter one, Muslims within and beyond Islamic civilization who condemn those who condone or carry out violence against innocent humanity in the name of Islam are too often overshadowed by the amplified violence propagated by Islam's radical adherents and the global publicity afforded Muslims who justify such aggression. After hearing the bellicose language of such Muslim radicals as Zarqawi or Masri, many in the West feel that strategies of tolerance are terra incognita for Islam and the Muslim world.

At the same time, many Muslim communities in the West and throughout the Muslim world are wrestling with sociopolitical exploitation and economic underdevelopment, recoiling against the injurious effects of globalization and the ideological onslaught of Western culture (what Huntington calls "Westoxification"), and struggling to uphold the integrity of traditional Islamic culture. Many Muslims view the West's dissemblance of tolerance as a disingenuous, valueless indifference, where individuals are extracted from their group identities, and a universal strangeness and religious apathy are espoused. Muslims describe the thin conceptualization of tolerance that dominates the West as nothing more than hypocritical relativism or indifference, intolerant of absolute convictions. George Washington University professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr makes this assertion:

The very assertion of tolerance on the basis of relativism brings about a negation and intolerance toward those who refuse to participate in the prevalent process of relativization. That is why, while many people in the West talk of tolerance, they are usually very intolerant of members of other civilizations which do not accept their views . . . The challenge [for the West] is how to be tolerant toward those who do not accept the Western definition of the human state, nor relativism and secularism, those who belong to other civilizations or even those within the West for whom the sense of the Absolute and the Sacred has not withered away and is not likely to wither away no matter how much one extols the glory of secularism.<sup>35</sup>

Nasr concludes by challenging the Islamic world to learn how to tolerate an opposing culture that "threatens its very existence" without forfeiting its essence, while the secularized West, he argues, must "learn the difficult lesson" that its liberal perceptions of "man and the world are not necessarily universal."<sup>36</sup>

For a cross-cultural concept of tolerance to emerge, secular concepts of tolerance espoused by the West must acknowledge the important contributions

that religious perspective brings to understanding tolerance, and religious adherents in the Muslim world must ultimately demonstrate how the concept of authentic tolerance is an inherent aspect of their ultimate concern instead of some wholly secular invention forcefully imposed on Islam. Just as Christians in the West must espouse a tolerance that is imbued by the Gospel, Muslims must teach the inherent importance of tolerance without sacrificing the exclusive claims of their faith. In other words, a cross-cultural, transnational, and interfaith effort must be made to locate a mutual understanding and appreciation of tolerance.

Both Muslim and Western worlds face formidable obstacles to coexistence, as tolerance has been either equated with sinful disobedience or diluted into an opaque and hollow concept replete with ambiguity. Indeed, John Christian Laursen is right: tolerance, as a *via media* concept, “is often unstable in the sense that there will be pressures to move toward one or both of the extremes: toward persecution or full respect.”<sup>37</sup> A necessary tension will persist, as coexistence will largely depend on the ability of both world cultures to nurture, defend, and express the fragile cross-cultural strategy of tolerance. Whether a “clash of civilizations” is underway or simply a popular trope that neglects the complexity associated with Western and Islamic cultures, it does not take away from the reality of a multilayered conflict taking place between Muslim and Western cultures today. One must not overlook the predominantly negative connotations both sides are ascribing toward the cultural and religious Other. At what Nasr calls “this dangerous juncture of human history,”<sup>38</sup> it is important for Islamic and Western cultures to embrace a dialogue of humane coexistence, extrapolating from their rich histories and traditions the inherent and ecumenical strategy of tolerance.

### Conclusion

Mitrovica, Kosovo, is a city divided between its Muslim Albanian majority and its Orthodox Serbian minority. The cross-cultural tension is high in Mitrovica, which has been a volatile area of interethnic, interreligious violence in the region for a number of years. In 2005, the bridge crossing the river Ibar, which largely divides the two communities and is heavily monitored by NATO peacekeepers, was ceremonially reopened for operation at scheduled intervals. Some have protested the bridge’s reopening, preferring to remain physically (and psychologically) divided. Others, however, view the reopened and redesigned crossing as a symbolic attempt to bridge those religiocultural divisions that have long plagued Mitrovica—a symbolic token toward reconciliation and peaceful engagement. Elucidating

the limited symbolism of the reopening, at the conclusion of the ceremony, Albanian and Serbian onlookers hastily returned to their divided communities on opposite sides of the river, and traveling into the Other's territory remains uncommon.<sup>39</sup> Some dismiss the refurbished and reopened bridge as an idealistic gesture elevated above the muddy realities of conflict that exist below, while for others it represents one proactive, hopeful step forward toward coexistence somewhere in the future.

Some may consider an investigation into the theoretical, theological, and historical conceptualizations of tolerance within Western and Islamic cultures to be, like the bridge in Mitrovica, an idealist exposition that is divorced from the convoluted reality of conflicts on the ground. It is true that the idea of tolerance has not been a conspicuous component of history, with official intolerance playing a predominant role in every human civilization. Nevertheless, while it must be conceded that tolerance has been a perfunctory element at best, subject to the pragmatic dictates of history, its transcultural relevance should not be discounted. In every era dominated by systematic or official intolerance toward the Other, one can also locate contemporaneous proponents of tolerance. Those who theorized on the importance of tolerance certainly aspired toward an ideal environment of coexistence and heightened virtue, but they did so cognizant of the difficult social and political realities within which they lived and participated.

In our contemporary context of multi-level conflict between Islamic and Western cultures, we are not void of transcultural resources for addressing current realities. This project showed how an eclectic, yet consensual, appeal for tolerance can be harnessed from a venerable depository of Western and Islamic theories, revelations, and traditions to help facilitate an intercultural and interreligious accommodation for coexistence (as well as heightened virtue). Perhaps both cultures would prefer a conforming worldview. But when it comes time to choose between conformity and coexistence, two competing goods, it is clear that, in a temporal context, the latter is the only realizable alternative. Even if one were to challenge the existence of a rudimentary core of intercultural virtues, such as justice, humility, liberty, and charity, they would find difficulty in dismissing the borderless desire to peacefully coexist. Walzer is correct that an individual or community would confront a profound burden of proof in attempting to explain to the world community how peaceful coexistence is not a worthy and intrinsic goal of all humanity. Coexistence does not have to be seen as a lesser of two evils; rather, it can be portrayed, in fidelity to both Islamic and Western traditions, as an acceptable inevitability of lasting human diversity. Consequently, tolerance for the sake of coexistence remains an inherent part of the pragmatic and ethical desiderata of both traditions.



Conflict between “us and them” is etched into the annals of human civilization. Tolerance, however, has also been a timeless strategy, variously defined and infrequently implemented, that must be reconsidered and employed today. A. J. Conyers is right: to tolerate otherness is a strategy, and its profundity is in direct relation to its intention. Its importance depends on how and why it is used, in the service of what purpose.<sup>40</sup> In Seyyed Nasr’s words, “The future of the world in the next few years and decades will depend obviously on how various world views and civilizations will be able to live together.”<sup>41</sup> A hermeneutic of tolerance that cultivates mutual respect, goodwill, and active engagement is an important strategy for living together or coexisting, and, just as lasting peace between two persons must be motivated by an internal desire to endure disagreement in the hopes of reconciliation, transcultural coexistence must also begin with an intracultural desire to relocate tolerance as a cultural predisposition of both Western and Islamic civilizations.

The history of human civilization is one of confluence, contention, and coexistence—an apt generalization of the historical and contemporary relations between Islam and the West. In light of the inimical international context today, coexistence and conflict resolution must be cultivated by our world’s cultures and religions. Theologian and scholar at the University of Chicago Martin Marty makes the hopeful statement that “more alert citizens of the world are at work attempting to effect polities and policies in which conflicting religions [and cultures] can learn to coexist and even cooperate with each other.”<sup>42</sup> Muslim scholar at the University of Tunisia Muhammad Talbi has called for Western and Islamic scholars to engage in the struggle for wisdom and greater understanding, “to gird themselves for the battle to create a confluence of interests.”<sup>43</sup> For coexistence to occur, voices within Islam and the West must decide to explore together their immutable differences and important commonalities. It is hoped that this work has made a humble contribution to this worthy and urgent endeavor.

# Notes

## Introduction

1. Huntington's hypothesis was first articulated in a 1993 *Foreign Affairs* article entitled "The Clash of Civilizations?" The hypothesis was expounded at book length in 1997. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 22–28; and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997). See Stanley Kurtz, "The Future of History," *Policy Review* 113 (June/July 2002).
2. Samuel Huntington, Keynote Address, Colorado College's 125th Anniversary Symposium: "Cultures in the 21st Century: Conflicts and Convergences," February 4, 1999.
3. Caution is taken when using the terms "West" and "Islam," or "Western civilization" and "Islamic civilization." This project is sensitive to the tendencies to objectify "Western" or "Islamic" identity with oversimplified generalizations and stereotypes that suppose a neat, compartmentalized unity of culture—neglecting the intracultural differences and internal struggles between religious and secular, as well as local, state, and regional entities. Recognizing the historical interconnectedness of our world and the internal complexity and diversity of civilizations, the above terms are used within a cross-cultural paradigm that seeks to accentuate the important differences, as well as shared values, between Western and Islamic cultures.
4. The divisive terms *dar al-kufr* (or *dar al-harb*: "abode of war") and *dar al-Islam* are regularly utilized by Muslim extremists. Concomitantly, many westerners also nurture a binary perspective that contrasts a "peace-loving," "civilized" West with a "backwards," "belligerent" Muslim world.

Muslim intellectual Khaled Abou El Fadl describes how this dichotomous view of the world—*dar al-harb* versus *dar al-Islam*—was derived by Muslim jurists writing during a developmental era for Islamic law, from the eighth to eleventh centuries. This medieval period was characterized by incessant reciprocating threats and forays between rival states and kingdoms, where territorial dominance was a geopolitical necessity. Abou El Fadl rightly references historical context—not religious conviction—as the prevailing impetus behind the incorporation of these divisive geographical distinctions into Islamic jurisprudence. (Neither the Qur'an nor Sunna, the two most important sources of Islamic law, legitimates these distinctions.) Khaled Abou El



Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 223–28. Arguably, in today’s global context of proliferating transnational migration and growing cultural pluralism, a two- or even three-abode world is untenable, even though it is still embraced by pundits and citizens in both Western and Islamic cultures. Despite the geographic and demographic realities that complicate this binary perspective, one must nonetheless address the intellectual and sociocultural arguments that continue to bolster this dichotomous worldview.

5. Fred Dallmayr, “Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory,” *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (June 2004): 250.
6. Dallmayr, 252; see also, Anthony J. Parel, “The Comparative Study of Political Philosophy,” in *Comparative Political Philosophy: Studies Under the Upas Tree*, 2nd ed., ed. Anthony J. Parel and Ronald C. Keith (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 14.
7. Parel, 12; and Dallmayr, 252.
8. See Stanley Kurtz’s, “The Future of History,” for a concise and contemplative exposition of the two predominant Western worldviews competing for global allegiance: Samuel Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations” and Francis Fukuyama’s “The End of History and the Last Man.”
9. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 2.
10. Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Amin Kuftaro, lecture given at the Muslim Christian Conference (Malta 1987), available at [http://www.kuftaro.org/English/wot/coexistence\\_in\\_mediterranean.htm](http://www.kuftaro.org/English/wot/coexistence_in_mediterranean.htm) (accessed on October 10, 2005).
11. Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 174.
12. *Ibid.*, 179.
13. More information on the purposes of The Alan B. Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence and Coexistence International is available at <http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/Slifka/> and <http://www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/linked%20documents/CIVisionValuesGoals/>. Coexistence International (CI) is an insightful entity dedicated to the idea and processes of coexistence. Its vision statement imagines “a world in which people of different religions, races, ethnicities, and cultures relate with respect and recognize their interdependence, where diversity is embraced for its positive potential, and where equality is valued and actively pursued.” More information on the vision and work of CI is available at <http://www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/about.html>.
14. “Exploring the Possibilities and Limits of Collaboration: Commonalities and Differences in Coexistence and Related Fields,” prepared for Coexistence International by Isabella Jean, with Jessica Berns and Cynthia Cohen (May 2006), 7, available at <http://www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/linked%20documents/BarometerReport%20FINAL%20June%202006.pdf>. For further reading on coexistence see also Eugene Weiner, ed., *The Handbook of Interethnic Coexistence* (New York: The Abraham Fund, 2000); Muhammad Abu Nimer, *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice* (New York:

- Lexington Books, 2001); Antonia Chayes and Martha L. Minow, eds. *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity After Violent Ethnic Conflict* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003); Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, ed., *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman, and Eric C. Marcs, eds. *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2006).
15. Jean, Berns, and Cohen, 7. Indeed, positive structural and perceptual transformations often result from nonviolent expressions of conflict. See Angela Nyawira Khaminwa, "Coexistence," in *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, Conflict Research Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted July 2003, available at <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/coexistence/>.
  16. Walzer, 2 and xi–xii.
  17. John Christian Laursen, "Orientation: Clarifying the Conceptual Issues," in *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 2.
  18. *Ibid.* For a greater examination of the differences between *tolerance* and *toleration* see Andrew R. Murphy, "Tolerance, Toleration, and the Liberal Tradition," *Polity* 29, no. 4 (1997): 593–623; Michael Walzer, xi; Jay Newman, *Foundations of Religious Tolerance* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1982); and Phillips Brooks, *Tolerance: Two Lectures* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1887).
  19. J. Budziszewski, *True Tolerance: Liberalism and the Necessity of Judgment* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 221.
  20. See Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen, eds., *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Toleration in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996); John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); and John Christian Laursen, *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites from Cyrus to Defoe"*.
  21. Nederman and Laursen, *Difference and Dissent*, 5.
  22. Istvan Bejczy. "Tolerantia: A Medieval Concept," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58, no. 3 (1997): 367.
  23. *Ibid.*, 372.
  24. Walzer, 10–12. See also, Laursen, "Orientation: Clarifying the Conceptual Issues," 2–3.
  25. Walzer, xii.
  26. See, for example, Mehdi Amin Razavi and David Ambuel, eds., *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997); Susan Mendus, ed., *The Politics of Toleration in Modern Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); Louis J. Hammann and Harry M. Buck, eds., *Religious Traditions and the Limits of Tolerance* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Publications, 1988); and John Christian Laursen, ed., *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" from Cyrus to Defoe*.

27. Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration, c. 1100-c. 1550* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).
28. J. Budziszewski, *True Tolerance: Liberalism and the Necessity of Judgment* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000).
29. Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon, 2002). Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

## Chapter 1

1. Samuel Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War," *Foreign Affairs* 72 (November/December 1993): 194.
2. Samuel Huntington, Keynote Address, Colorado College's 125th Anniversary Symposium: "Cultures in the 21st Century: Conflicts and Convergences," February 4, 1999, available at <http://www.coloradocollege.edu/Academics/Anniversary/Transcripts/HuntingtonTXT.htm>.
3. *Culture* and *civilization* will be used interchangeably when discussing the contemporary macro-variances, -interactions, and -conflicts between Muslim and Western worlds. Of course, it is acknowledged that civilizations, as the most expansive entities of culture, are comprised of many geographic cultures (local, national, regional, etc.) and include diverse communities where different languages, social structures, religions, and ethnicities further contribute to the complex dimensions of a society or civilization. When discussing the characteristics of Islamic or Western cultures, this project seeks to remain sensitive to their various subcultures and will emphasize various intracultural complexities throughout.
4. Huntington, "Cultures in the 21st Century: Conflicts and Convergences."
5. Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War," 194.
6. W. Cole Durham, Jr., "Perspectives on Religious Liberty: A Comparative Framework," in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspectives*, ed. Johan D. van der Vyver and John Witte, Jr. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996), 4.
7. Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality," *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 2, no. 1 (2002/2003): 38.
8. *Ibid.* The Jewish and Christian embrace of Muslim philosophy and science in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance periods was, in general, not reciprocated by the Muslim world. Muslims continued, in large part, to view Europe as backward and of limited usefulness. Reluctantly, the Ottoman Empire, out of necessity, began to draw from Western ideas (military science, etc.). For an insightful study on the dynamics of intercultural exchange between Islam and

- the West, see Bernard Lewis's, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001).
9. Abou El Fadl, 38.
  10. *Ibid.*, 39–40.
  11. *Ibid.*, 48.
  12. *Ibid.*, 44.
  13. Fred Halliday, "West Encountering Islam: Islamophobia Reconsidered," in *Islam Encountering Globalization*, ed. Ali Mohammadi (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 14.
  14. Abou El Fadl, 48–49. See also Anders Jerichow, "Civilizations: Clash or Cooperation?" in *Islam in a Changing World: Europe and the Middle East*, ed. Anders Jerichow and Jørgen Baek Simonsen (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon, 1997), 144–56.
  15. Abou El Fadl, 49.
  16. Mahboob A. Khawaja, *Muslims and the West: Quest for "Change" and Conflict Resolution* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 135–36.
  17. See, for instance, A Jerichow and J. Baek Simonsen, eds., *Islam in a Changing World: Europe and the Middle East* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1997); Colin Chapman, *Islam and the West: Conflict, Coexistence or Conversion?* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 1998); Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1999); Shireen T. Hunter, *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998); Jorgen S. Nielsen, ed., *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 1998.); Dieter Senghaas, *The Clash Within Civilizations: Coming to Terms with Cultural Conflicts* (London: Routledge, 2001); Edward Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation* 273, no. 12 (2001); Jonathan Sacks, *Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, 2nd ed. (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003); Mark David Gismondi, "Civilisation as Paradigm: An Inquiry into the Hermeneutics of Conflict," *Geopolitics* 9, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 402–25; and Michael Novak, *The Universal Hunger for Liberty: Why the Clash of Civilizations is Not Inevitable* (New York: Basic Books, 2004).
  18. Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What?" 194.
  19. Quoted in *ibid.*
  20. Abou El Fadl, 47.
  21. See Oliver Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 332.
  22. Presidential Address, September 20, 2001, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>.
  23. See, for instance, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/03/19/world/main607516.html> and <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,600874-1,00.html>.
  24. For a translation and commentary on the March 12 statement of alleged responsibility by this group and its unlikely connection to al-Qaeda, see Middle East Media Research Institute at <http://memri.org/bin/articles/>.

- Spanish investigators suspect the attacks were carried out by a localized contingent of Muslim extremists, “inspired by al-Qaeda.” Twenty-nine Muslims, the majority of Moroccan origin, are being tried in Spain. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6665233.stm>.
25. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3523804.stm>.
  26. “I Won’t Let the Bombers Beat Me,” *BBC News*, August 4, 2005, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
  27. YouGov/ *Daily Telegraph* Survey, 8 July 2005, available at <http://www.yougov.com/>. See also Anthony King, “Britons will Never Give in to Terrorists,” July 9, 2005, available at <http://portal.telegraph.co.uk/news/>.
  28. Olivier Roy, “Europe’s Response to Radical Islam,” *Current History* 104, no. 685 (November 2005): 360.
  29. *Ibid.*.
  30. Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, 2. Roy defines “neofundamentalism” as a conservative, narrowly-defined, scripturalist understanding of Islam “that rejects the national and statist dimension in favour of the *ummah*, the universal community of all Muslims, based on *sharia* (Islamic law).” Such terminology appropriately describes those Muslims who have been uprooted or have migrated to the West and no longer identify with a particular nation-state. Through a “deterritorialisation” of Islam, they seek to reestablish a transnational *ummah* and restore an Islamic way of life within their minority Muslim communities. *Ibid.*, 1–2.
  31. Muhammad Talbi, “Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding between Islam and the West,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 25 (Spring 1988): 177.
  32. Mahmoud Ayoub, “Christian-Muslim Dialogue: Goals and Obstacles,” *The Muslim World* 94 (July 2004): 317.
  33. Lalsangkima Pachau, “Engaging the ‘Other’ in a Pluralistic World: Toward a Subaltern Hermeneutics of Christian Mission,” in *Studies in World Christianity* vol. 8, no. 1 (2002): 68.
  34. Gören Larsson, “The Impact of Global Conflicts on Local Contexts: Muslims in Sweden after 9/11—the Rise of Islamophobia, or New Possibilities,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 16 (January 2005): 30.
  35. *Ibid.*, 31.
  36. *Ibid.*, 34. See also A. S. Roald, “Islamofobi,” in *Jalla! Nu Kär vi granen. Möte med den muslimska kultursfären* (Stockholm: Regeringskansliet, Utrikes departementet, 2002), 53; and A. S. Roald, “From ‘People’s Home’ to ‘Multiculturalism’: Muslims in Sweden,” in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Z. Y. Haddad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
  37. “Dutch Face Future After Van Gogh,” *BBC News*, 7 July 2005, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/> (accessed September 17, 2005).
  38. Quoted in Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam: The Death of Theo Van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 7.
  39. “Dutch Face Future After Van Gogh.”

40. Jenny Percival, "Why Salman Rushdie was knighted," *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>. In an era of rising sociopolitical tension between many western and majority Muslim nations and indefinite warring on terror, some policy makers are questioning the timing of Rushdie's knighthood and expressing concern over its likely potential to exacerbate cross-cultural bitterness and violence. Britain's conservative MP Stewart Jackson stated as much: "If the senior officers of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office were not able to use their knowledge of the Islamic world to consider the likely ramifications of this decision, then I'm extremely concerned." *Ibid*.
41. See Fareed Zakaria, "How We Can Prevail," *New York Times*, July 18, 2005, 39. The statement was authorized by ten *fatwas* (religious edicts by qualified jurists) that were issued from recognized scholars such as Tantawi; Iraq's Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani; Egypt's mufti, Ali Jumaa; and the Al-Jazeera TV-sheik, Yusuf al-Qaradawi.
42. See [http://www.cair.com/Not\\_in\\_Islam\\_Name/](http://www.cair.com/Not_in_Islam_Name/). The "Not in the Name of Islam" petition reads, in part: "We, the undersigned Muslims, wish to state clearly that those who commit acts of terror, murder and cruelty in the name of Islam are not only destroying innocent lives, but are also betraying the values of the faith they claim to represent. No injustice done to Muslims can ever justify the massacre of innocent people, and no act of terror will ever serve the cause of Islam. We repudiate and dissociate ourselves from any Muslim group or individual who commits such brutal and un-Islamic acts. We refuse to allow our faith to be held hostage by the criminal actions of a tiny minority acting outside the teachings of both the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him."
- "As it states in the Quran: '*Oh you who believe, stand up firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even if it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor; for God can best protect both. Do not follow any passion, lest you not be just. And if you distort or decline to do justice, verily God is well-acquainted with all that you do.*'" (Quran 4:135).
43. See, for example, Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon, 2002); Khaled Abou El Fadl, "Islam and the Challenge of Democracy," in *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Deborah Chasman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights and International Law* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990); and David Little, John Kelsay, and Abdulaziz A. Sachedina, eds., *Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures: Western and Islamic Perspectives on Religious Liberty* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).
44. Larsson, 40.
45. Abou El Fadl, "The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality," 34. Abou El Fadl recounts an incident in Mecca in March of 2002 that he argues should have caused public outrage and led to criminal convictions in

Saudi Arabia. According to an official report, fourteen young girls were killed—burned to death or asphyxiated by smoke—when an accidental fire destroyed their public school. According to parents, there was no way to escape the fire, as doors were locked from the outside by Saudi religious police to prevent the girls from escaping the school. Because the girls were not properly covered, the mutawwa'un (religious police) forbade firemen or police from rescuing them and, according to unofficial reports, actually beat some of the girls back inside the burning building. He also mentions various other "inhumane incidents in the history of modern Islam," such as the stoning and incarceration of rape victims in Nigeria and Pakistan, the excommunication of writers in Egypt, the degradation of women by the Taliban, and the demolition of ancient Buddha statues in Afghanistan. *Ibid.*, 33–35.

46. *Ibid.*, 50.

47. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003), 178–79. Nasr laments the Western tendency to label these various Islamic resurgence movements in the Muslim world as *fundamentalism*—a word derived from an "American Protestant context," later conferred upon Islam. Such a term is misleading and adds confusion by dismissing many variations of Islamic revivalism taking place in Muslim societies. In fact, he argues that a "great majority of Muslims" are expressing the desire to reassert their religiocultural identity. Such Islamic revivalism should not be indiscriminately labeled "fundamentalism," Nasr cautions, because "most people who share these ideals are traditional Muslims." Fundamentalism will be addressed in further detail in chapter four. It is a term that essentially represents only those puritanical movements that seek to reform wayward Muslim societies through a more narrowly-defined interpretation and "strict application" of *Islamic law* that not only contests the invasion of Western ideas but also dismisses the "intellectual, artistic, and mystical traditions of Islam" as historical aberrations, antithetical to the Islamic way of life. See *ibid.*, 179–80.

48. *Ibid.*, 179–80.

49. Khurram Murad, "Prophethood: Root Cause of Islam-West Conflict," *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* (July 1992), available at <http://www.jamaat.org/>.

50. Kurshid Ahmed, "US Leadership and World's Conscience," available at <http://www.jamaat.org/>.

51. Saba Mahmood, "Is Liberalism Islam's Only Answer?" in *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, 77.

52. Huntington, "The West: Unique, not Universal," 41.

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*, 30–35.

55. *Ibid.*, 41.

56. *Ibid.*, 40.

57. Based on the 2007 BP Global Report, at the end of 2006 61.5 percent of the proved oil reserves were located in the Middle East (Iran-11.4 percent, Iraq-9.5 percent, Kuwait-8.4 percent, Oman 0.5 percent, Qatar-1.3 percent, Saudi

- Arabia-21.9 percent, Syria-0.2 percent, United Arab Emirates-8.1 percent, and Yemen-0.2 percent). See *Statistical Review of World Energy 2007* at <http://www.bp.com>.
58. Stanley Kurtz, "Text and Context," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon, 2002), 53–54.
  59. Talbi, 170.
  60. Akbar Ahmed, *Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2007), 225.
  61. According to Ahmed, the uncertainty of life for Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq has caused many to look back "with nostalgia to recent times that offered some semblance of stability," preferring "the harshest of religious governments" (the Taliban in Afghanistan) "or the worst dictator" (Saddam in Iraq) to the sociopolitical circumstances following the American-led invasions. *Ibid.*, 226.
  62. See, for instance, Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam." While a realist perspective may conclude that "balance of power" politics will perpetuate Western intrusions until Muslim states can acquire the geopolitical ability to remedy this imbalance, liberal internationalism would suggest that equalization can begin now through international mediating organizations such as the United Nations. Yet there is concern from many Muslim intellectuals and political leaders that organizations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund possess inherently Western biases that prohibit a genuine respect for cultural equality and global unanimity.
  63. Richard K. Betts, "The Soft Underbelly of American Primacy: Tactical Advantages of Terror," *Political Science Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2002); also in *Conflicts after the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*, 2nd ed., ed. Richard K. Betts (New York: PearsonLongman, 2005), 536.
  64. Samuel P. Huntington, "The West: Unique, Not Universal," *Foreign Affairs* 75 (November/December 1996), 37.
  65. Akbar S. Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 98.
  66. Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War," 37.
  67. Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam*, 98.
  68. Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* (New York: Times Books, 1995).
  69. Benjamin Barber, "Beyond Jihad vs. McWorld," *The Nation* (January 21, 2002): 17.
  70. Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam*, 197.
  71. Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War," 194.
  72. Nasr, *Islam*, 185–86.
  73. Abdullah Saeed and Hassan Saeed, *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy and Islam* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 13.



74. See Youssef K. El-Hage, "Human Rights: A Western Christian Invention?" in *The Near East School of Theology Theological Review* vol. 25, no. 2 (November 2004): 12–14. While the UDHR was approved with a unanimous vote by the General Assembly, Saudi Arabia abstained from voting, and Egypt officially objected to Article 18's freedom to change one's religion. U.N. Doc. A/PV.183, at 913 (1948); see also El-Hage, 14.
75. U.N. Doc. A/C.3/SR.127, 391–92 (1948); see also El-Hage, 13–14. Demonstrating the often unappreciated complexity and diversity of Islamic civilization, Pakistan's foreign minister Muhammad Zafrulla Khan told the plenary session of the General Assembly in 1948 that the language on religious liberty in Article 18 of the UDHR was entirely consistent with the tenets of Islam. While sympathetic to Baroody's concerns over the historical relationship between Christian missionary work and its potential political motivations, Khan held firm to his belief that the freedom to change one's religion was compatible with his interpretation of Islam. El-Hage, 14–15. See also Saeed and Saeed, 14. From Khan's Muslim perspective, "the Moslem religion was a missionary religion: it strove to persuade men to change their faith and alter their way of living, so as to follow the faith and way of living it preached, but it recognized the same right of conversion for other religions as for itself." Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly, 183rd Plenary Meeting, December 10, 1948, 890; see also El-Hage, 14–15. It is important to note, however, that Zafrulla Khan was an Ahmadi, a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim sect that is openly persecuted in Pakistan today. Through anti-blasphemy provisions, Ahmadis are no longer recognized as Muslims. Thus, it is impossible that in Pakistan today a "heterodox" Ahmadi would be placed in the position of foreign minister. As such, Khan's interpretation of Islam would be largely dismissed by many jurists and leaders within contemporary Islamic civilization. Still, the words of this once-respected "Muslim" are significant.
76. Saeed and Saeed, 16. There are, of course, dissident voices of Muslim intellectuals from Western and Islamic venues who are challenging the severity of punishment for apostasy dictated in the *shari'a*. For example, Mohamed Talbi, history professor at the University of Tunis, argues that the Qur'an speaks of a harsh penalty for apostasy in eternity but provides no explicit injunction for temporal punishment in this life.
77. *Ibid.*, 16–19. The Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights (1981) and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (1990) adopt a more limited definition of religious freedom than that espoused in the UDHR. Neither document directly addresses the right to change one's religion.
78. Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5. Bernard Lewis states: "It is now a commonplace that the term 'Islam' is the counterpart not only of 'Christianity' but also of 'Christendom'—not only a religion in the narrow Western sense but of a whole civilization which grew up under the aegis of that religion." *Ibid.*, 4.
79. *Ibid.*, 7–8.
80. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

81. Simon Jargy, *Islam et Chrétienté* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1981), 10; quoted in Talbi, "Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding Between Islam and the West," 162.
82. Talbi, 174.
83. Lewis, *Islam and the West*, 17.
84. For example, history and religious studies professor Phillip Jenkins predicts that six nations (Brazil, Mexico, Philippines, Nigeria, D. R. Congo, and the United States) each may have 100 million Christians or greater by 2050, with only one of those countries (United States) coming from the developed West. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 104–5. What is more, he shows how those countries that currently have the highest birth rates are "neatly divided between mainly Christian states, such as Uganda and Bolivia, and solidly Muslim nations, such as Yemen and Afghanistan." *Ibid.*, 191.
85. Madeline Albright, "Faith and Diplomacy," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* (Fall 2006): 3–9. The former U.S. Secretary of State writes: "Studies indicate that wars with a religious component last longer and are fought more savagely than other conflicts." In her assessment of religion and conflict, Albright calls on U.S. diplomats to develop a greater understanding (expertise) and appreciation of religion's role in numerous conflicts around the world. Only then can policy makers and conflict negotiators "anticipate events rather than respond to them." Her analysis concludes by asserting religion's immutable place in contemporary international relations, and, while remaining wary of a manipulated religion's propensity to justify violence, she encourages policy makers to welcome religion's role in reinforcing the "core values necessary for people from different cultures to live together in some degree of harmony." See *ibid.*, 3, 4, and 9. See also Madeline Albright, *The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007).
86. For a concise overview of this trend, see Jenkins, 196–214.
87. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Metaphysical Roots of Tolerance and Intolerance: An Islamic Interpretation," in *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance*, ed. Mehdi Amin Razavi and David Ambuel (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 50.
88. Mohammed Arkoun, "Is Islam Threatened by Christianity," *Cross Currents* 45, no. 4 (1995/1996): 470.
89. *Ibid.*, 471.
90. Jenkins, 189.
91. The controversial passage from Manuel II used by Pope Benedict XVI states, "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached."
92. George Friedman, "Faith, Reason and Politics: Parsing the Pope's Remarks," a Stratfor geopolitical intelligence report (September 19, 2006), available at <http://Stratfor.com>.

93. Nasr, "An Islamic Interpretation," 55.
94. Talbi, 187.
95. Professor Abdullahi An-Na'im made this distinction during a keynote address on reframing human rights in Berlin, Germany on October 4, 2005. I participated the following day in a roundtable discussion with An-Na'im that pursued the issue of human rights and cultural consensus further.
96. Pachau, 68.
97. Talbi, 182.
98. Ibid., 183.
99. Ibid., 189–91.

## Chapter 2

1. Michael Gervers and James M. Powell, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance: Social Conflict in the Age of the Crusades* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001), xvii. See also John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration Before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 1–10.
2. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen, eds., *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Toleration in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996); John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998). Other works include John Christian Laursen, ed., *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" from Cyrus to Defoe* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999); Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourse of Toleration, c. 1100–c. 1550* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, "The Problem of Periodization in the History of Toleration," *Storia della Storiographica* 37 (2000): 55–65.
3. Nederman and Laursen, "Difference and Dissent: Introduction," in *Difference and Dissent*, 5.
4. Heiko A. Oberman, "The Travail of Tolerance: Containing Chaos in Early Modern Europe," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 13. Oberman references Joseph Lecler's fascinating two-volume study, *Toleration and the Reformation*, trans. T. L. Westow (New York: Association, 1960). Lecler's exhaustive examination covers a wide berth of prominent and peripheral proponents of tolerance across a wide geographical range from England to Transylvania. Oberman applauds Lecler's expansive scholarship and acknowledgement of the effects of political context, but he points to Lecler's reinforcement of intellectual history as the primary perimeter of the debate. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 29. Ole Peter Grell offers Martin Luther's theological evolution in the area of tolerance as one example of how social, political, and religious considerations

pressed Luther to modify his argument significantly. “Within less than a decade,” writes Grell, “Luther had moved from an outsider’s position, hoping and wanting to reform the whole Church to that of an insider who sought to protect and secure the existence of the Protestant churches already established.” Consequently, subsequent works on tolerance that utilized Luther’s writings (such as Sebastian Castellio’s *De haereticis an sint persequendi* (1554)) only reference his early arguments, while necessarily neglecting his later positions. Ole Peter Grell, “Introduction,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, 5–6.

6. John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, “General Introduction: Political and Historical Myths in the Toleration Literature,” in *Beyond the Persecuting Society*, 7.
7. *Ibid.*, 7.
8. *Ibid.*, 7–8.
9. Bernard Hamilton, *The Medieval Inquisition* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1989), 16.
10. Tertullian, *Of Patience*, in *Latin Christianity: Its Founder Tertullian*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, trans. Rev. S. Thelwall (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1994), Chapter Five—Of Revenge, 713.
11. Tertullian, *Liber ad Scapulum*; in *Latin Christianity: Its Founder Tertullian*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, trans. Rev. S. Thelwall (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1994), 105.
12. Inspired by a suggestion made by Sister Francis Mary in her introduction to Lactantius, *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, in Sister Francis Mary McDonald, ed. and trans., *Lactantius: The Minor Works* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 127–28.
13. Gelarius was a notorious persecutor of Christians, instigating and supporting Diocletian’s brutal policies of intolerance. Gelarius’ declaration of tolerance was approbated the year of his death.
14. Licinius would return to persecuting Christians and ultimately be defeated in a power struggle with Constantine and executed.
15. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, trans. Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 5.20.23–26.
16. *Ibid.*, 5.20.7, 9.
17. *Ibid.*, 5.19.11.
18. *Ibid.*, 5.19, 20.
19. *Ibid.*, 5.19.26.
20. *Ibid.*, 5.22.1–5.
21. *Ibid.*, 6.18.2
22. *Ibid.*, 6.18
23. *Ibid.*, 6.18.32.
24. Tertullian, *Of Patience*, Of Revenge, 713.
25. For example, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines tolerance as “the action or practice of enduring or sustaining pain or hardship; the power or capacity of enduring.”

26. *Divine Institutes*, 6.18.29–33.
27. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 7.10.5–9.
28. Lactantius, of course, devoted a significant portion of his *Divine Institutes* to the violent and intolerant nature of paganism. Other minor works, such as his pamphlet *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, also relay this persistent theme.
29. See Anthony Bowen's and Peter Garnsey's introduction to Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 48.
30. Lactantius, *On the Death of the Persecutors* 1.5.
31. *Ibid.*, 6.18.18–19.
32. Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State 1050–1300* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 16.
33. Brian Tierney, "Religious Rights: An Historical Perspective," in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspectives*, ed. John Witte, Jr. and Johan D. van der Vyver (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1996), 31.
34. See Heinrich Fichtenau, *Ketzer und Professoren: Häresie und Vernunftglaube im Hochmittelalter* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1992).
35. Bernard Hamilton, 17.
36. *Ibid.*, 18.
37. *Ibid.*, 19–20. Bernard Hamilton and Heinrich Fichtenau both distinguish between academic skeptics or intellectual heresies (confined to theological technicalities and complex doctrinal debates), where the potential for generating a popular following was unlikely, and those popular heresies that posed a real threat of exacting significant support from the masses, potentially undermining the institutional Church.
38. Tierney, "Religious Rights: An Historical Perspective," 25.
39. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, trans. Fathers of the Dominican English Province (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), 2.2ae.39.4.
40. *Ibid.*, 2.2ae.10.9.
41. Hamilton, 33. See also Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State*, 139–42.
42. *The Constitutions of Melfi*, J. Powell, trans. (Syracuse University Press, 1971), 7; quoted in Tierney, "Religious Rights: An Historical Perspective," 31.
43. Hamilton, 33. In 1224, under Frederick II, the secular penalty for heresy was burning; if clemency was granted, however, the heretic's tongue was to be cut out. *Ibid.*
44. Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State*, 139; and Hamilton, 33..
45. Hamilton, 72–73.
46. Tierney, "Religious Rights: An Historical Perspective," 25–26. This general tolerance toward Jews and Muslims waned significantly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as forced baptisms, massacres, and ultimatums of conversions or exile grew in frequency (especially during the "reconquests" of Ferdinand and Isabella).
47. R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987). Regarding Rouen and the first crusade, the monk Guibert of Nogent recorded the following occurrence: "At Rouen, one day, some men who had taken the cross

with the intention of leaving for the crusade began complaining among themselves. 'Here we are,' they said, 'going off to attack God's enemies in the East, having to travel tremendous distances, when the Jews are right here before our very eyes. No race is more hostile to God than they are. Our project is insane!' Having said this they armed themselves, rounded up some Jews in a church—whether by force or by ruse I don't know—and led them out to put them to the sword regardless of age or sex. Those who agreed to submit to the Christian way of life could, however, escape the impending slaughter." Guibert of Nogent, *A Monk's Confession: The Memoirs of Guibert of Nogent*, trans. Paul J. Archambault (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 111. While clerical propagators of the crusades, like Bernard of Clairvaux, made attempts to prevent violent persecution of Jews, arguing that scripture warranted dispersion only, "the preaching and preparation of crusades" and "religious fervour and social unrest associated with them, continued to represent danger for the Jews." Moore, 31.

48. Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 7–9. "For almost a thousand years," writes Lewis, "from the first Moorish landing in Spain to the second Turkish siege of Vienna, Europe was under constant threat from Islam." It was a "double threat" in the first few centuries, he continues, "not only of invasion and conquest, but also of conversion and assimilation." *Ibid.*, 13.
49. Avicenna (Ibn Sina), al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Averroes (Ibn Rushd) were all Muslim scholars (often renounced by Islamic clergy for their religious mysticism) who produced important commentaries on Aristotle. Averroes (Ibn Rushd) was largely unknown in the early twelfth century but later became the most important Muslim (Spanish-Arab) scholar to Western (especially Parisian) philosophers. See Heinrich Fichtenau, 317–18. In fact, the Grand Commentator, as he was titled, was at that time more influential to Christian thought than Islamic.
50. Nederman, "Introduction: Discourses and Contexts of Tolerance in Medieval Europe," in *Beyond the Persecuting Society*, 19–20.
51. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 25. (Why is this deleted? More than one Nederman source is used in this chapter.)
52. Chapter 2 of Nederman's *Worlds of Difference*, "Demonstration and Mutual Edification in Inter-religious Dialogue," provides an insightful study of tolerance and the medieval genre of inter-religious dialogue.
53. See Peter Abelard, *Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and a Christian*, trans. Pierre J. Payer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979). Peter Abelard experienced persecution and intolerance as a heretic. He was castrated in 1117 and charged with heresy twice, first at the Council of Soissons in 1121 and then by Bernard of Clairvaux in 1140 at the Council of Sens. See Constant J. Mews, "Peter Abelard and the Enigma of Dialogue," in *Beyond the Persecuting Society*, 25. Mews highlights a major difference between Abelard's dialogue and the popular philosophical dialogues of Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109) a century earlier (*Se vertate, De casu diaboli, De libertate arbitrio*)

and Anselm's pupil Gilbert of Crispin (*Disputatio Iudei et Christiani*). Rather than using the philosopher for the sole purpose of demonstrating Christianity's inherent logic ("the rightness of one's point of view"), Abelard's dialogue avoided religious dogmatism and, instead, endeavored to understand competing viewpoints (that of a philosopher, Jew, and Christian) and emphasize a common agenda of reaching the supreme good. Abelard, of course, agreed that the Christian faith was superior and demonstrable through reason, but was unique for his criticism of Christendom's authoritarian intolerance of those beyond the Christian worldview. *Ibid.*, 39–40. In a morally instructive poem, the *Carmen ad Astralabium*, addressed to his son, Abelard raises the issue of lasting human difference: "The world is divided among so many sects that what may be the path of life is hardly clear. Because the world harbors so many conflicting dogmas, each makes his own, by way of his own background. In the end, no one dares rely on reason in these things, while he wants to live in some kind of peace with himself. Each person sins only by having contempt for God—only contempt can make this person guilty." Quoted in Mew, 44. Thus, as Mew concludes, for Abelard, "only contempt of God, not ignorance, is truly sinful." *Ibid.* His open-ended dialogue was an original argument for tolerating disagreement and difference while raising the edifying nature of inter-religious discussion.

54. Nederman, *Words of Difference*, 6.
55. J. N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms 1250–1516: Precarious Balance*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 247.
56. Havelock Ellis, "Ramon Lull at Palma," in *The Soul of Spain* (London, 1937), 203; quoted in J. N. Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull and Lulism in Fourteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 2.
57. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms 1250–1516*, vol. 1, 27.
58. *Ibid.*, 239–40.
59. See Anthony Bonner's "Historical Background," in *Selected Works of Ramon Llull (1232–1316)*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 10.
60. Llull was successful at the end of his life in influencing the Council of Vienne in 1311 to support his goal of establishing a school of oriental languages. Canon 11 of the Council sanctioned the instruction of Arabic, "Chaldean," and Hebrew at Paris, Oxford, Salamanca, Bologna, and the Papal Courts to those being trained as missionaries. See *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader*, trans. and ed. Anthony Bonner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 41.
61. "Contemporary Life," in Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader*, 28–29.
62. *Ibid.*, 30.
63. Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 46. Bonner suggests that "for the sake of persuasion," Llull was not beyond adjusting his sociopolitical arguments: "Llull sought to persuade in order to save souls; consistency of personal social convictions was for him less important." *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*, 46–47.

65. *Ibid.*, 81–82. All except for the surviving Spanish translation appear to have been translated during Lull’s lifetime. *Ibid.*
66. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 30.
67. Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 80.
68. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 30.
69. Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 78.
70. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 30.
71. Ramon Llull, *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, trans. Anthony Bonner in *The Selected Works of Ramon Llull (1232–1316)*, 1:113.
72. *Ibid.*, 1:300. In the Epilogue, the Gentile emerges from the dialogue illuminated by the path of salvation and begins to worship God in prayer. As he emotionally recounts the charitable, prudent, patient, and self-restrained nature of God, the three wise men were reminded of their own sinful state and convicted to reclaim a devotion to the divine virtues of God commensurate with that of the Gentile. *Ibid.*, 1:299–300.
73. As mentioned earlier, regarding the Other, the voluntary nature of faith played a prominent role in medieval doctrine. Llull, however, is not dealing with an apostate Jew, Christian, or Muslim but an unbelieving, searching Gentile. It is unlikely that an apostate would have found similar sympathy from these religious wise men.
74. Llull, 1:303.
75. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 36.
76. Llull, 1:304.
77. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*. Grell writes that, according to traditional scholarship (he references W. K. Jordan’s four-volume work, *The Development of Religious Toleration in England*, and Joseph Lecler’s two-volume study, *Toleration and the Reformation*), the Age of Reason was initiated with the tolerance of humanists like Erasmus and Thomas More, followed by the “bigotry and intolerance of the first decades of the Reformation” (he references Calvin, Knox, and Beza), culminating in the religious wars and “a gradual tiredness of constant religious confrontation.” This led to a waning religious zeal at the close of the sixteenth century, which paved the way for “a common-sense tolerance of religious differences.” *Ibid.*, 1. The post-Reformation argument then asserts that, in response to the horrors and chaos associated with the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religious wars, a broadened Enlightenment understanding of tolerance emerged (motivated by pragmatism and progress).
78. Ole Peter Grell, “Introduction,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, 10.
79. Genesis 19; Joshua 5, 6; John 10:16 *NIV* (New International Version).
80. The *Requerimiento* was written by Spanish jurist and professor Juan López de Palacios Rubios of the Council of Castille and approved by King Ferdinand as a legal instrument for achieving the imperial mission of the Church.



81. Quoted in George Sanderlin, ed., *Witness: Writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas*, foreword by Gustavo Gutiérrez (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), xiii-xiv.
82. Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950), 36–37.
83. See *ibid.*, 37.
84. *Ibid.*
85. Quoted in *Witness*, xv.
86. Las Casas, *Apologetic History*; quoted in *Witness*, 175.
87. Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*, trans. and ed. Safford Poole (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 41.
88. Qur'an 2:256.
89. Quoted in Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Only Way*, trans. Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J., ed. Helen Rand Parish (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1992), 96.
90. *Ibid.* The famous debate in Valladolid (1550–51) between Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and Las Casas offers another scintillating resource for demonstrating how one of the most significant writers on tolerance in the sixteenth century challenged the spiritual-temporal dichotomies of Western civilization. For an insightful and concise article on the role of tolerance in this famous debate, see Gerardo López Sastre, “National Prejudice and Religion in the Toleration Debate between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda,” in *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin’s, 1999). In addition, for a thoughtful study on Las Casas’s use of *dominium*, as it had been systematized in the theology of Aquinas, see Paul J. Cornish, “Spanish Thomism and the American Indians: Vitoria and Las Casas on the Toleration of Cultural Difference,” in *Difference and Dissent*. See also Lewis Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1959).
91. Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 122–23.
92. *Ibid.*, 96–97.
93. Quoted in *ibid.*, 152.
94. *Ibid.*, 123.
95. *Ibid.*, 155–56.
96. *Ibid.*, 80.
97. Henry Kamen is one of several scholars to make this suggestion. See Henry Kamen, *The Rise of Toleration* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 8.
98. Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 96.
99. *Ibid.*, 136.
100. Kevin Terraciano, “The Spanish Struggle for Justification in the Conquest of America,” in *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe*, 106.
101. *Ibid.*, 120.
102. See Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz’s introduction to Jean Bodin’s, *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, trans. Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), xv-xxviii.
103. Quoted in Kuntz, xxvi.

104. Ibid., xxiv.
105. Ibid., lxiii.
106. Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 40–49.
107. Kuntz, lxv.
108. Ibid., lxvi.
109. Jean Bodin, *Colloquium*, trans. Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 147.
110. Ibid., 148.
111. Ibid., 151. Bodin selects the Muslim participant, Octavius, to introduce the moral dilemma of the erring conscience. Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, 2:182. Octavius quotes Thomas Aquinas' well-known statement: "When errant reason has established something as a precept of God, then it is the same thing to scorn the dictate of reason and the commands of God." Bodin, 157–58. In other words, one is compelled to follow his conscience. The purity of spirit and inviolable conscience that Aquinas and Scholasticism had applied to moral issues Octavius, to the chagrin of the *Colloquium's* more conservative participants, now "extends to religion at large." Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, 2:182.
- In his *Six livres de la république (Six Books of a Commonwealth, 1576)*, Bodin also illustrated the Ottoman's anachronistic level of communal tolerance: "The great emperor of the Turks doth with as great devotion as any prince in the world honor and observe the religion of others; but to the contrary permitteth every man to live according to his conscience, yea and that more is, near unto his palace at Pera, suffereth four diverse religions, viz, that of the Jews, that of the Christians, that of the Grecians, and that of the Mahometans . . . the people of ancient time were persuaded, as were the Turks, all sorts of religions which proceed from a pure mind, to be accountable to God." Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, trans. Kenneth D. McRae, ed. Kenneth D. McRae (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), IV, 7, 537–38; also quoted in Creppell, 47.
112. Bodin, 468.
113. Ibid., 469–71.
114. Ibid., 465. In Revelation 3:15–16 NRSV (New Revised Standard Version), God declared to the church in Laodicea, "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth."
115. Bodin, 465.
116. Ibid., 471.
117. Lecler, 184.
118. Ibid.
119. Bodin, 471.
120. Creppell, 62–63.
121. Quoted in Kuntz, xxvi.

122. Moreover, tolerance was often seen as “co-dependent” with a number of virtues, including charity, respect, humility, patience, and goodwill. This suggestion is made by Budziszewski, 7. Furthermore, Budziszewski argues that true tolerance, in fact, is a virtue; but this will be discussed in chapter three.
123. *Ibid.*, 225.
124. *Ibid.*, 7.
125. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 121.

### Chapter 3

1. *CIA Factbook*, available at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>; cited in Philip Jenkins, *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 16.
2. See the Central Institute's Archives (2005). The statistics were drawn from a concise article by Wolfgang Polzer, “More than 53 Million Muslims in Europe,” *WorldNetDaily*, October 22, 2005, available at <http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article/>. See also the Migration Policy Institute at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Resources.cfm>.
3. Jenkins, 118.
4. Demographic, Social and Economic Indicators, UNFPA State of World Population 2005, available at <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2006/>.
5. Jenkins, 118.
6. Oliver Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 16.
7. Jenkins, 113.
8. The UNFP's net migration is based on the number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants. The medium variant is set at 951,000. Available at <http://esa.un.org/unpp/p2k0data.asp>.
9. Roy, 19.
10. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 37–40.
11. France is still recognized as having one of the top ten largest Catholic communities in the world. The low levels of “active” participation and attendance, however, clearly affect the significance of this statistic. See Jenkins, 29–32. In addition, though Catholicism still holds the number one spot among religions in France, Philip Jenkins offers evidence demonstrating the drastic decline in Catholic leadership in the country. For instance, in 2004 ninety men were ordained by the Catholic Church in France—compared to 566 men ordained in 1966. “In the 1990s alone, the number entering French seminaries fell from 1,200 to 900.” Jenkins, 33. In contrast to a declining Catholic population, Muslims in contemporary France, currently 8 to 10 percent of the nation's populace, are projected to represent 20 to 25 percent of the French total by 2050. Jenkins, 118.

12. *Associated Press Report*, “French Panel Backs School Ban on Head Scarves,” available at <http://foxnews.com/> (accessed January 2006).
13. See *ibid.*; “President’s risky move,” *BBC News*, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/> (accessed January 2006).
14. Jenkins, 197.
15. *BBC*, “President’s risky move.”
16. *Ibid.*
17. Another example occurred in Italy when an Italian Muslim activist recently went to court to have a local public school remove the crucifix on display in his son’s classroom, and the local magistrate agreed; vigorous debate and outrage occurred across the nation. Such national outrage led many Muslims to perceive that in a Western secular society, steeped in centuries of Christian tradition, some religions still have greater freedom than others. See “Italian Muslims Fear ‘Crucifix’ Fallout,” *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>. In Germany debate over the “freedom” of Muslim school teachers to wear the headscarves in public schools continues—state legislatures have been given the authority to protect or disallow this privilege.
18. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 84.
19. *Ibid.*, 84–85.
20. *Ibid.*, 26. For a thought-provoking look at the realities of banal discrimination toward minority cultures in the UK, see Eileen Barker, “Banal Discrimination: Equality of Respect for Beliefs and Worldviews in the UK,” in *International Perspectives on Freedom and Equality of Religious Belief*, ed. Derek Davis and Gerhard Besier (Waco, TX: J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, Baylor University, 2002). Banal discrimination is generally defined as a “common unthinking discrimination” that encourages traditional, cultural, and social boundaries that ensure a “normalcy” or status quo in society. See Barker, 31.
21. Walzer, 26.
22. *Ibid.*, 26–28.
23. For a discussion of liberal tolerance as “non-judgmental,” see Michael Sandel, “Judgmental Toleration,” in *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality: Contemporary Essays*, ed. Robert George (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 107–12.
24. Liberal theorist Ronald Dworkin emphasizes the value of an ethically neutral body politic, demanding that the government be neutral “on what might be called the question of the good life.” Quoted in Budziszewski, 25; and in Gary Remer, “Bodin’s Pluralistic Theory of Toleration,” in *Difference and Dissent*, ed. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996), 119. See Ronald Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 181–204. See also Bruce Ackerman, *Social Justice in the Liberal State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980); and John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971). See also J Budziszewski’s challenge to ethical neutralism

- in his chapter “Arguments for Ethical Neutrality,” in *True Tolerance* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 61–101.
25. In the words of Clermont-Tonnerre, who advocated Jewish emancipation in late eighteenth-century France: “It would be repugnant to have a society of non-citizens in the state, and a nation within a nation.” See Gary Kates, “Jews into Frenchmen: Nationality and Representation in Revolutionary France,” in *Social Research* 56 (Spring 1989): 229; partially quoted in Walzer, 39.
  26. Walzer, 88.
  27. *Ibid.*, 89. See also Nederman and Laursen, “Difference and Dissent: Introduction,” in *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Toleration in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 4.
  28. Nederman and Laursen, 4. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen highlight the recent challenges to the tolerance claims of contemporary Western society from communitarian political theorists. *Ibid.*, 3–4.
  29. A. J. Conyers, *The Long Truce: How Toleration Made the World Safe for Power and Profit* (Dallas: Spence Publishing Company, 2001), 9.
  30. *Ibid.*, 17.
  31. Walzer, 25.
  32. Conyers, 10.
  33. *Ibid.*, 51.
  34. *Ibid.*, 5–12.
  35. See David B. Burrell’s insightful analysis on the authenticity of the modern conception of freedom. “Freedom and Creation in the Abrahamic Traditions.” *International Philosophical Quarterly* v. 40, no. 2 (2000), 161–171.
  36. Budziszewski, 64 and 70. J. Budziszewski, a political theorist at the University of Texas, challenges modernity’s mutation of skepticism, arguing that ancient skeptics, for example, “did not claim that we cannot know anything at all, but only that our knowledge lacks absolute certainty.” Doubt, of course, has always been a key ingredient to skepticism, but this does not mean that an individual, community, or culture was proscribed by the skeptic from “acting on whatever principles seemed on rational reflection *most likely* to be true.” *Ibid.*
  37. *Ibid.*, 64–66, 234.
  38. Nederman and Laursen, 3–4.
  39. Nicholas Lash, *The Beginning and the End of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 240.
  40. Conyers, 243.
  41. *Ibid.*, 244.
  42. *Ibid.*, 245.
  43. John Rawls, “The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus [1987],” in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 424.
  44. “The Idea of Public Reason Revisited (1997),” in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, 591.

45. Budziszewski, 234. Rawls's original position, as a constructivist political conception, is, unlike that of Kant, focused primarily on a constructivist framework for political justice rather than an encompassing moral doctrine. Such a construction, argues Rawls, makes an overlapping consensus of basic political values possible in a pluralistic, democratic society. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 89–90.
46. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 26.
47. *Ibid.*, 90.
48. *Ibid.*, 25 n. 27.
49. *Ibid.*, 24–27.
50. Rawls, “The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus,” 424–26.
51. Budziszewski, 76–77.
52. Lash, 24.
53. Donald Demarco, “Is Tolerance a Virtue?” in *Lay Witness* (November/December 2005): 14–15.
54. Sandel, 107–112.
55. *Ibid.*, 110.
56. Demarco, 14–15.
57. *Ibid.*
58. Conyers, 7–8.
59. *Ibid.*, 4.
60. Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 4–5.
61. DeMarco, 15.
62. Budziszewski, 5–15. Budziszewski begins his exposition by explaining what he means by virtue: “Virtues are complex dispositions of character, deeply ingrained habits by which people call upon all of their passions and capacities in just those ways that aid, prompt, focus, inform, and execute their moral choices instead of clouding them, misleading them, or obstructing their execution.” *Ibid.*, 5.
63. *Ibid.*, 5–7.
64. *Ibid.*, 7.
65. Rushworth M. Kidder offers a similar assessment of the term “value” that provides an effective framework for distinguishing between those ideas that possess an intrinsic worth and those which help to achieve some worthy goal. Rushworth M. Kidder, *How Good People Make Tough Choices* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 79.
66. Conyers, 8.
67. Budziszewski, 7.
68. *Ibid.*, 13.
69. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 211.
70. Budziszewski, 224.
71. Available at <http://www.unesco.org/tolerance/declaeng.htm>. The declaration was formulated by the member states of the United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization, convening in Paris at the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference in 1995.

72. See the United Nations, "A Global Quest for Tolerance," available at <http://www.unesco.org/tolerance/global.htm#introduction>.
73. Walzer, 11.
74. This, of course, is not to say that *concordia* was not desired. Lull, Bodin, and Las Casas all desired religious unity. However, recognizing the likelihood of lasting difference, they sought unity elsewhere. For Lull it came in the form of a common humility and search for truth, respecting the inalienability of human freedom. For Las Casas unity was located in the idea of the *imago Dei*; all of humanity is bequeathed a sacred dignity as created in God's image. For Bodin, temporal unity rested in a pragmatic fidelity to the state.
75. National Public Radio, "Diverse Marseilles Spared in French Riots," December 10, 2005.
76. See Daniel Williams, "Long Integrated, Marseille is Spared," *washingtonpost.com*, November 16, 2005, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>.
77. "Diverse Marseilles Spared in French Riots."
78. *Ibid.*
79. For instance, in 2002 a Jewish synagogue was burned in Marseille, sparking fears that anti-Semitism was reemerging in France. Moreover, the continuation of the Arab and Israeli conflict in the Middle East remains an unsettling motivation for Jewish-Muslim conflict in cities like Marseille.
80. "Long Integrated, Marseille is Spared," *washingtonpost.com*.
81. *Ibid.*
82. Glenn Frankel, "Harmony Strikes a Chord with Muslims, Jews in Marseille," *washingtonpost.com*, February 21, 2004, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>.
83. NPR, "Diverse Marseilles Spared in French Riots."
84. *Washingtonpost.com*, "Long Integrated, Marseille is Spared."
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*
87. Budziszewski, 228.
88. Walzer, 11.
89. Kidder, 34.
90. "The Law of Peoples (1993)," in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, 561–62.

## Chapter 4

1. Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 181.
2. John L. Esposito, "Practice and Theory," in *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Deborah Chasman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 95–96.

3. Michael Novak, *The Hunger for Universal Liberty: Why the Clash of Civilizations is not Inevitable* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 209.
4. *Ibid.*, 208–9.
5. *Ibid.*, 209.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Mashhood Rizvi, “Intolerable Injustices,” in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon, 2002), 70–71.
8. Martin Kramer, “Coming to Terms: Fundamentalists or Islamists?” in *The Middle East Quarterly* X (Spring 2003); available at <http://www.meforum.org/article/541/>.
9. See Noah Feldman, *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 41–50.
10. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003), 179–80.
11. Feldman, 42.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Natana J. Delong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 17, 18.
14. *Ibid.*, 18.
15. Abou El Fadl, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, 8–9.
16. Remarks from Natana J. Delong-Bas in an interview she gave through the Saudi-American Forum; available at [http://www.saudi-american-forum.org/Newsletters2004/SAF\\_Item\\_Of\\_Interest\\_WahhabiIslam1.htm](http://www.saudi-american-forum.org/Newsletters2004/SAF_Item_Of_Interest_WahhabiIslam1.htm).
17. Delong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam*, 288–89. Delong-Bas makes an important distinction between Osama bin Laden and Islamists such as Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, (medieval scholar) Ibn Taymiyya, and Sayyid Qutb. Unlike bin Laden, these men “were highly educated scholars and jurists with a profound knowledge of the Quran, Sunna, and Islamic law. Bin Laden, in contrast, is neither a scholar nor a teacher. He is a businessman by education and profession. He lacks the scholarly credentials and moral weight to issue *fatawa* on his own, which explains why there are always several signatories on his declarations.” *Ibid.*, 275.
18. Delong-Bas, Saudi American Forum conversation.
19. Abou El Fadl, 8–9.
20. Nasr, 180.
21. *Ibid.*
22. John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, eds., *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 74.
23. Lenn E. Goodman, *Islamic Humanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12.
24. Maududi, quoted in Beverly Milton-Edwards, *Islam and Politics in the Contemporary World* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), 53. See also John Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 147.



25. Abul A'la Maududi, "Political Theory of Islam," *The Islamic Law and Constitutions*, 6th ed., ed. Khurshid Ahmad (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1977), 160; also in Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 147.
26. Milton-Edwards, 54–55. See also Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 148–49; and Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990), 110–11.
27. Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 320.
28. Maududi, *Rights of Non-Muslims in the Islamic State* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1982), 22–23. See also Choueiri, 110–12; Noah Feldman, 22; and Black, 343–44.
29. Maududi, *First Principles of the Islamic State* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1983), 67. See Choueiri, 111.
30. Choueiri, 111–12.
31. *Ibid.*, 111.
32. Maududi, *First Principles of the Islamic State*, 16–65; and Choueiri, 110.
33. Among Qutb's many writings is a thirty-volume commentary on the Qur'an that has been widely studied by Muslims over the last four decades.
34. Feldman, 43. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded by Egyptian Hasan al-Banna in 1928 as a religious, educational, and socio-political order grounded on a conservative and comprehensive worldview of Islam that encompassed every aspect of life, temporal and spiritual. Its weltanschauung directly opposes that of the West. The Muslim Brotherhood became a distinct political force in 1939, directly challenging the corrupt monarchical government in Egypt in favor of a re-Islamization of society. Its influence would spread across the Middle East, arguably becoming "the single most important institutional element in the diffusion of political Islam." As some in the Muslim Brotherhood began to resort more regularly to political violence and radical policies, the organization would be forcefully suppressed and isolated by government authorities, culminating in al-Banna's assassination in 1949. *Ibid.*, 42–43.
35. In *Milestones*, Qutb states that "the chasm between Islam and *Jahiliyyah* is great, and a bridge is not to be built across it so that the people on the two sides may mix with each other, but only so that the people of *Jahiliyyah* may come over to Islam . . . If not, then we shall say to them what God commanded His Messenger—peace be upon him—to say: "For you your way, for me mine. 109:6)" Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (Dar Al-Ilm, Damascus, Syria, 1964), 140.
36. Feldman, 43. See also Black, 321; and Yvonne Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival," in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 85–87. According to Youssef Choueiri, *jahiliyya* was reframed as a fundamentalist concept by Muslim Indian politicians and thinkers in the 1930s and 1940s to refer to the Hindus' non-Islamic doctrines and ideologies. Choueiri, 94–95.
37. Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, trans. William E. Shepard (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 303–4, 308.

38. Sayyid Qutb, quoted in Robert Worth, *New York Times*, October 13, 2001; Goodman, *Islamic Humanism*, 14.
39. Qutb, *Milestones*, 83.
40. *Ibid.*, 127. See also 130 and 131.
41. Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 245, referenced in Black, 341.
42. Ahmad Moussalli, *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992), 162–63; quoted in Black, 341.
43. Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 8.
44. Qutb, *Milestones*, 93; quoted in Haddad, 82.
45. Goodman, 15.
46. Qutb, *Social Justice*, 59–60, 66, 79, 110–11, 213–14. See also Goodman, 12–16.
47. Haddad, 84.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Qutb, *Milestones*, 57 and 76.
50. Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 297, 299, 306, 329, 333–35. See also Qutb, *Milestones*, 77–92, 159–60; and Haddad, 86–87.
51. Qutb, *Milestones*, 131.
52. Goodman, 15.
53. Abou El Fadl, 11.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. Nasr, 181.
57. Feldman, 47.
58. Abou El Fadl, 10–11.
59. *Ibid.*, 11.
60. Qur'an 9:29. Abou El Fadl, 12–13.
61. Qur'an 5:51. *Ibid.*, 11.
62. Abou El Fadl, 13.
63. Nasr, 182.
64. *Ibid.*
65. Dale F. Eickelman, "The Coming Transformation in the Muslim World," in *Current History* (January 2000), 16. Dale Eickelman is a professor of anthropology and human relations at Dartmouth College. One of his more recent works is *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999).
66. Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 4. Friedmann acknowledges the same required admission for Christians. Furthermore, he points out that Muslims can find solace in the commonly held belief that the living standards of non-Muslims under medieval Muslim rulers, for instance, "were significantly better than those imposed on Jews and other minorities by their Christian counterparts." Bernard Lewis supports this view: "There is nothing in Islamic history to compare with the massacres and

- expulsions, the inquisitions and persecutions that Christians habitually inflicted on non-Christians and still more on each other. In the lands of Islam, persecution was the exception; in Christendom, sadly, it was the norm.” Bernard Lewis, *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East* (New York: Schocken Books, 1998), 129. See also, Abou El Fadl, *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, 23.
67. W. Cole Durham, Jr. “Perspective on Religious Liberty: A Comparative Framework,” in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspectives*, ed. Johan D. van der Vyver and John Witte, Jr. (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1996), 13.
  68. *Ibid.*, 15.
  69. Esposito, “Practice and Theory,” 98–99.
  70. Feldman, 20.
  71. *Ibid.*
  72. *Ibid.*, 20–21.
  73. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Freedom, Equality, and Justice* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2002), 47.
  74. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *Pakistan: An Islamic Democracy* (Lahore: n.p., n.d., [1951]), 5; quoted in Sharif Al Mujahid. *Ideology of Pakistan* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1974), 4; found in *Essays on Pakistan Affairs*, vol. 2 (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1975), series no. 21.
  75. Qur’an 2:256.
  76. Qur’an 109:6.
  77. Qur’an 5:51.
  78. This suggestion is made by Roger M. Savory, “Relations between the Safavid State and its Non-Muslim Minorities,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 14, no. 4 (2003): 435.
  79. Abou El Fadl, 14.
  80. Qur’an 11:118–9.
  81. Qur’an 49:13; see Abou El Fadl 15–16.
  82. Abou El Fadl, 16.
  83. *Ibid.* The Ottoman and Mughal Empires would later confront sizeable non-Muslim populations with policies of systematic toleration. The idiosyncrasies underpinning their policies for coexistence will be discussed in chapter five.
  84. Abou El Fadl, 17. Qur’an 5:69, 2:62.
  85. Abou El Fadl, 18.
  86. Qur’an. 8:61. Abou El Fadl 19–20.
  87. Qur’an 2:190; see 2:193. See Abou El Fadl, 20.
  88. Abou El Fadl, 20–21. Qur’an 60:9, 4:90, 4:94, 2:194, 2:190, and 5:2. See Goodman for a meaningful discussion and exegesis of studies, texts, and scholars dealing with the historical roots and diverging nature of Islamic humanistic thought.
  89. Qur’an 2:256.
  90. William H. Brackney, ed. *Human Rights and the World’s Major Religions*, vol. 3, *The Islamic Tradition*, by Muddathir ‘Abd al-Rahim (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 46. Qur’an 2:190. ‘Abd al-Rahim is a professor of Political Science and

Islamic Studies at the International Islamic University of Malaysia. He is also a charter member and Secretary General of the Sudanese National Committee for Human Rights, founded in 1967.

91. Qur'an 60:8–9. Ibid.
92. Ibid., 46–47.
93. Ibid., 47.
94. Quoted in Ibid., 47.
95. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-Farid*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 1983), 247; quoted in 'Abd al-Rahim, 47–48.
96. Abū Zahrah, *al-Mujtamaa' al-Insānī fī Zill al-Islām*, 2nd ed. (Jeddah: Dār al-Ṣu'ūdiyyah, 1981), 57–58; quoted in Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The Dignity of Man: An Islamic Perspective* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2002), 69.
97. These sayings were composed in the sixteenth century by Ala 'al-Din ibn Mutaqqi, "The Treasury of Workmen in Traditions and Sayings and Deeds" (*Kanz al-'Ummal fī Sunan al-Aqwal wa'l-Af'al*) and were published on the margins of the *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal (Cairo edition); quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), 79. The Sunni canon of *hadith* was completed five hundred years after Muhammad's death and consists of six authentic collections of traditions: al-Bukhari (d. 870), Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 875), Ibn Maja (d. 886), Abu Dawud (d. 888), al-Tirmidhi (d. 892), al-Nisai (d. 915). Ahmed ibn Hanbal (mid-eighth century) is often included as a recognized source of traditions. The sayings above were published in the margins of Ibn Hanbal's *Musnad*. Abū Zahrah, quoted in Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 69.
98. Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 68.
99. Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad Ibn Hanbal*, vol. 5, *hadith* no. 3655. See Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 68. The Prophet Muhammad's condemnation of *tanattu'* is clear in his pointed repetition, "Perished are the hair-splitters, perished are the hair-splitters, perished are the hair-splitters" (*hadith* no. 1824). Quoted in Ibid., 71.
100. Qur'an 7:199.
101. Qur'an 42:43.
102. Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 69.
103. Donaldson, 67–68. For most Shi'i, the *sunna* represents the deeds, sayings, and approvals of Muhammad, as well as the divinely ordained Imams who are believed to have also received divinely inspired revelations. Shi'i believe these Imams were appointed by God to follow Muhammad and to lead mankind in the Islamic way of life.
104. Muhammad Amin, *Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad* (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, n.d.); quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, 70.
105. Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 72.
106. Black, 57.
107. Paul Kurtz, "Free Inquiry and Islamic Philosophy: The Significance of George Hourani," in *Averroës and the Enlightenment*, ed. Mourad Wahba and Mona

- Abousenna (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996), 234. See also George F. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 9–14.
108. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics*, 6.
  109. *Ibid.*
  110. Black, 58.
  111. *Ibid.*, 58–60.
  112. *Ibid.*, 58.
  113. Kurtz, 240–41.
  114. Black, 59–60; George Hourani, *On the Harmony between Religion and Philosophy* (London: Luzak & Co., 1967).
  115. *Ibid.*, 59.
  116. Kurtz, 239.
  117. Black, 63.
  118. Abdolkarim Souroush, *Treatise on Tolerance* trans. Nilou Mobasser, (Praemium Erasmian Foundation, 2004), 1.
  119. *Ibid.*
  120. *Ibid.*, 2.
  121. *Ibid.*, 3–5.
  122. *Ibid.*, 6.
  123. Abou El Fadl, *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, 13–23.
  124. *Treatise on Tolerance*, 6.
  125. *Treatise on Tolerance*, 7.
  126. Goodman, 23.

## Chapter 5

1. Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam will Shape the Future* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006), 24.
2. *Ibid.*, 20, 22.
3. See, for instance, Roger M. Savory, “Relations between the Safavid State and its Non-Muslim Minorities,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 14, no.4 (2003): 435; William H. Brackney, ed. *Human Rights and the World’s Major Religions*, vol. 3, *The Islamic Tradition*, by Muddathir ‘Abd al-Rahim (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 52–60.
4. C. L. Cahen, “Dhimma,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. Bernard Lewis and J. Schacht (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1983), 227.
5. See Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 21; Cahen, 227. The origin of the “Pact of Umar” is disputed. Perhaps most in Western academe would agree that the Umayyad caliph, Umar II (717–20), was the creator of the first edict of tolerance. Bruce Masters seeks to mediate any uncertainty surrounding its official origins, arguing that the “final formulation” was

likely “a composite of many different agreements between Muslims and non-Muslims.” *Ibid.*

6. Noel J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964), 27; Savory, 435.
7. See Masters, 22; See also Savory, 435–36; Cahen, 227; Jane I. Smith, “Islam and Christendom: Historical, Cultural, and Religious Interactions from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Centuries,” in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 308; and *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad to the Capture of Constantinople*, vol. 2 of *Religion and Society*, ed. and trans. Bernard Lewis (New York: 1974), 216–23.
8. See Cahen, 227–31; and Masters, 16–40.
9. See Savory for a brief discussion of the *ahl al-dhimma*. A concise overview of the legal nature of *dhimma* is provided by Chafik Chehata, “Dhimma,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 231; C. L. Cahen, “Dhimma,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 227–31; Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, 2 vols. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982); and Masters, 16–40.
10. Jane I. Smith, 308–9. The concept of *dhimma* was interpreted in a more exacting sense mainly by judges and jurists of Islam, while in a more contextual sense by various regional rulers and administrators. The legal schools differed on the level of religious tolerance to afford non-Muslims. While Christians did serve important posts throughout the Islamic empire—court physicians, architects, engineers, translators, philosophers, and civil administrators—they were, at the same time, prohibited from, inter alia, living in Mecca or Medina, giving testimony about a Muslim in legal courts, marrying a Muslim, or building new churches or repairing old ones in towns where Muslims lived. *Ibid.*, 308.
11. Masters, 24.
12. See Cahen, 230, for a brief comparison of historical tolerance and intolerance between Christian and Muslims. See also Masters, 21–23.
13. Masters, 29, 33, 35–39.
14. *Ibid.*, 29.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, 39.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, 29.
19. *Ibid.*, 40.
20. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 14.
21. Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 11.
22. *Ibid.*, 11–12.
23. Bernard Lewis, *Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Age of Discovery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 16. For a thorough historical study on the Ottoman system of tolerance see Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of*

- Islam* (New Haven, CT: Princeton University Press, 1984), 3–66; Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*; Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*.
24. While equal to each other, Walzer explains how prominent non-Muslim communities were all “subject to the same restrictions vis-à-vis Muslims—with regard to dress, proselytizing, and intermarriage, for example.” What is more, these communities were given “the same legal control over their own members,” and, significantly, the level of religious and social freedom the Ottomans extended to the various *millets* was generally greater than that shown by the various communities to their individual members. Walzer, 18.
  25. *Ibid.*
  26. Richard Tapper, ed., *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 1991), 4; Ayse Kadioglu, “Republican Epistemology and Islamic Discourses in Turkey in the 1990s,” *Muslim World* 88 (January 1998): 5.
  27. Berkes, 221.
  28. Kadioglu, 4.
  29. *Ibid.*
  30. *Ibid.*, 5. The issue of religious inequality by the state was a critical item that the Western powers required a resolution to before rapprochement with the Ottoman state could occur. England, France, Austria, and the Ottomans formed a commission to construct the Reform Edict of 1856. *Ibid.*
  31. Tapper, 5.
  32. Kadioglu, 2.
  33. Tapper, 5–6.
  34. *Ibid.*
  35. Kevin Boyle and Juliet Sheen, *Freedom of Religion and Belief: World Report* (London: Routledge, 1997), 388.
  36. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 404. Of course, secularism would not be officially incorporated into the Constitution until 1937. See Berkes, 482.
  37. Berkes, 481–82.
  38. Tapper, 7.
  39. In addition to Kemalists, for example, the approximately twelve million Alevis, a Shi’i minority in Turkey, have purposefully embraced, in fidelity to their Islamic beliefs, the Turkish Republic’s secularism as a necessary safeguard against the religious persecution from the Sunni majority. See David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of a Secular Islamic Tradition* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 17; For insightful works on the Alevis see Shankland’s, *The Alevis in Turkey*; İlhan Ataseven, *The Alevi-Bektasi Legacy: Problems of Acquisition and Explanation* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wil International, 1997); Tord Olson, Catharina Raudvere, and Elisabeth Özdalga, eds., *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious, and Social Perspectives* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1998).

40. See Tapper, 7–8. Kadioglu writes of how Kemalism’s attempts to “marginalize” and direct Islamic institutions failed to disengage Islam from the public realm and, instead, made a way for its politicization. Kadioglu, 13.
41. Turkey continues to struggle with an ethnic intolerance and violence that culminated, in large part, with the transition towards nationalism and the desire for a Turkish identity. The sizeable Kurdish minority, for example, has faced persecution and intolerance because of their desire for cultural autonomy and the perceived threat they pose to national solidarity. Even though the Kurdish community is part of the majority Muslim population, its apparent refusal to accept its “Turkishness” has led to greater inequality, a general ethnic intolerance, and, in many cases, a forced assimilation. Turkey, then, is in essence an “ethnocracy” that “precludes any ethnonational differentiation within its borders.” Thus, although it demonstrates a significant degree of religious tolerance, it has not yet demonstrated an acceptable tolerance to those who are seen as a threat to the “sacred” Turkish identity of the secular state. Nils A. Butenshon, “State, Power, and Citizenship in the Middle East: A Theoretical Introduction,” in *Citizenship and the State in the Middle East: Approaches and Applications*, ed. Nils A. Butenshon, Uri Davis, and Manuel Hassassian (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 19–20.
42. Kadioglu, 13, 17. See also Michael Meeker, “The New Muslim Intellectuals in the Republic of Turkey,” in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State*, ed. Richard Tapper (New York: I. B. Tauris, 1991), 189–219.
43. Meeker, 200. Meeker makes this observation in his analysis of a particular Muslim intellectual’s work, that of Ali Bulac.
44. See Kadioglu, 13, 17–18.
45. Ahmet T. Kuru, “Search for a Middle Way,” in *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement*, ed. M. Hakan Yavus and John L. Esposito (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 119.
46. Kadioglu, 18.
47. Kuru, 117.
48. Fethullah Gülen, *Prophet Muhammad: The Infinite Light* (London: Truostar, 1995), 200–201; quoted in Ahmet T. Kuru, 117.
49. Fethullah Gülen, “The Two Roses of the Emerald Hills: Tolerance and Dialogue,” available at <http://www.fgulen.com/>.
50. Qur’an 64:14.
51. Qur’an 45:14.
52. Gülen, “The Two Roses of the Emerald Hills.”
53. Fethullah Gülen, “Tolerance in the Life of the Individual and Society,” Speech recorded on January 13, 1996, available at <http://www.fgulen.com/>.
54. Fethullah Gülen, “Tolerance,” in *The Thoughts of Growing to Yield Fruit* (Kaynak, Izmir, 1996), 1922. Article is available at <http://enfgulen.net> (accessed August 30, 2007).
55. Gülen, “Tolerance in the Life of the Individual and Society.”



56. Marvinne Howe, *Turkey Today: A Nation Divided over Islam's Revival* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2000), 47. Howe suggests that religious violence in Turkey is due in part to living in a "dangerous neighborhood" and experiencing a "spillover of violence" from more intolerant neighbors like Iran and Iraq. *Ibid.*
57. Ozay Mehmet, *Islamic Identity and Development: Studies of the Islamic Periphery* (London: Routledge, 1990), 69. It was Muhammad's Medina Contract that "made possible [in the seventh century] the livelihood of various groups with different religious convictions, secularists, and atheists in political unity." Kadioglu, 16.
58. Lenn E. Goodman, *Islamic Humanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 28. Goodman makes this important observation, suggesting a dynamic equilibrium as the ultimate goal.
59. Mehmet, 21.
60. A sizeable portion of this section on Pakistan is discussed in the *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law*. Aaron Tyler, "Administering a Sacred Trust: The Place of Religious Tolerance in the State of Pakistan," *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 5, no. 1.
61. Mahmood Monshipouri, "Reform and the Human Rights Quandary: Islamists vs. Secularists," *Journal of Church and State* 41, no. 3 (1999): 460–61.
62. Amnesty International 2004 Report, available at <http://www.amnesty.org/report2004/>. See also Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom, available at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/religion/>; and the "International Religious Freedom Report 2006," released by the U.S. Department of State, available at <http://www.state.gov/>.
63. See, for instance, the U.S. Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report* for 2005 and 2006.
64. Available at [http://www.muhammadanism.org/Government/Government\\_Pakistan\\_Blasphemy.htm](http://www.muhammadanism.org/Government/Government_Pakistan_Blasphemy.htm).
65. See Freedom House, *Country Report: 2006; International Religious Freedom Report* for 2006.
66. *International Religious Freedom Report* for 2006.
67. Constitution of Pakistan. See also Y. V. Gankovsky and V. N. Moskalenko, *The Three Constitutions of Pakistan* (Lahore: People's Publishing House, 1978).
68. Sharif Al-Mujahid. *Ideology of Pakistan* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1974), 4; found in *Essays on Pakistan Affairs*, vol. 2 (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1975), series no. 21.
69. *Ibid.*, 4–5.
70. John F. Richards, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Mughal Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 2; See also, Al Mujahid, 5.
71. Al-Mujahid, 5–6.
72. Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 239.
73. *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid.*

75. N. C. Mehta, "An Unpublished Testament of Babur," *The Twentieth Century* (January 1936): 340; quoted in Black, 239–40.
76. Black, 240.
77. Black, 242; and Richards, 38.
78. Richards, 39; and Black, 243.
79. Black, 243.
80. See, for instance, Black 239–46; M. D. Arshad, "The Mughal Period," in *An Advanced History of Muslim Rule in Indo-Pakistan* (Dacca: Rashida Akhter, 1967), 54–55; and S. M. Ikram, *Muslim Civilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 145.
81. Black, 240.
82. Arshad, 50.
83. Ibid.
84. Black, 248.
85. Rizvi, 364; quoted in Black, 248.
86. Black, 248.
87. Eugenia Vanina, *Ideas and Society in India from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 34, quoted in Black, 241.
88. Arshad, 54.
89. See Black, 246; and Arshad, 58. For a thorough study of Islam and the Mughals see M. D. Arshad, *An Advanced History of Muslim Rule in Indo-Pakistan* (Dacca: Rashida Akhter, 1967); and A. A. Rizvi, *The Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign with Special Reference to Abu'l Fadl (1556–1605)* (New Delhi: M. Manoharlal, 1975).
90. Black, 249; and Richards, 172, 175–77.
91. Richards, 297.
92. Noah Feldman, *After Jihad: American and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 120.
93. Ibid., 120; See also Michael Walzer, 15.
94. Muhammad Iqbal, "A New Altar," in *Poems from Iqbal* (London: John Murray, 1955), 8–9, interpreted in Ronald W. Neufeldt, "Islam and India: The Views of Muhammad Iqbal," in *Muslim World* (July–October 1981): 182.
95. Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 183.
96. Syed Abdul Wahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964), 54, quoted in Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 183.
97. Ronald W. Neufeldt, "Religion and Politics in the Thought of Muhammad Iqbal," *Journal of Religious Thought* 34, no. 1 (1977): 35–39; Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 183, 186.
98. Wahid, 54, 100–101; Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 185.
99. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf, reprinted 1960), 154.
100. Iqbal, 147.
101. Ibid., 156.
102. B. A. Dar, ed., *Letters and Writings of Iqbal* (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967), 55, 70, quoted in Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 187.

103. Vahid, 197; Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 187; L. R. Gordon-Polonskaya, "Ideology of Muslim Nationalism," in *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, ed. Hafeez Malik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 134.
104. Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 188.
105. Ibid.
106. Vahid, 100–101; Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 184–85.
107. L. R. Gordon-Polonskaya, "Ideology of Muslim Nationalism," in *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, ed. Hafeez Malik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 134.
108. Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing: A Study into the Religious Ideas of Sir Muhammad Iqbal* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), 111.
109. Vahid, 261; See also Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 191.
110. Gordon-Polonskaya, 135.
111. Quoted in Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: a Study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), 78.
112. Javie Iqbal, "Iqbal: My Father," in *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, ed. Hafeez Malik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 64.
113. Stephen Phillip Cohen, "The Nation and the State of Pakistan," *Washington Quarterly* 25 (Summer 2002): 110.
114. Ibid., 110–11.
115. Gandhi, 160.
116. Allen Hayes Merriem, *Gandhi vs Jinnah: The Debate over the Partition of India* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1980), 91–92; quoted in Gandhi, 160.
117. Eid Day broadcast, November 13, 1939, quoted in C. M. Naim, ed., *Iqbal, Jinnah, and Pakistan* (Syracuse: Syracuse University, 1979), 101; quoted in Gandhi, 185.
118. Afzal Iqbal, *Islamisation of Pakistan* (Delhi, Mohammed Ahmad for Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1984), 38–40.
119. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. M. A. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1964), 463, quoted in Afzal Iqbal, 37.
120. Gandhi, 180.
121. Cohen, 111.
122. Gandhi, 128–29.
123. Anwar Hussein Syed, *Pakistan: Islam, Politics, and National Solidarity* (New York: Peger, 1982), 59–61. See also, Afzal Iqbal, 38–41; Gandhi, 47–186.
124. Black, 320.
125. Mehmet, 66–67; and Black, 301–5, 320.
126. Eqbal Ahmed, "Religion in Politics," *Dawn* (January 31, 1991).
127. Ibid.
128. "Politics by Other Means," *The Economist* (July 21–27, 2007): 40.
129. "Musharraf Vows War on Militants," *BBC News*, July 12, 2007, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
130. John Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 34.
131. Ibid.

132. Walzer, 15.
133. *Ibid.*, 16.
134. Black, 248.
135. *Ibid.*
136. Mehmet, 66–67.
137. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, 82–83.
138. Walzer, 5–6.

## Chapter 6

1. The quotations and references in this paragraph were acquired from the “European Press Review,” *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
2. “In quotes: Reaction to Cartoons”; and “World Figures Deplore Cartoon Row,” *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
3. Several people were killed in Afghanistan, Somalia, Lebanon, and elsewhere as a result of violent protests. The Danish embassy in Syria was attacked. A mob in Beirut torched the Danish embassy and ransacked a Christian community in response to the cartoon publications. Protestors in Tehran broke windows of the Austrian embassy, businesses in Indian-administered Kashmir went on strike to protest, and, in Indonesia, authorities fired warning shots at rioters around the U.S. and Danish consulates in the country’s second largest city, Surabaya. While the response by Muslims in France has been subdued, French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy reprehended the violent rioting and protests: “I am totally shocked and find it unacceptable that because there have been caricatures in the West, extremists can burn flags or take fundamentalist or extremist positions which would prove the cartoonists right.” Caroline Wyatt, “Cartoon Row Rattles France,” *BBC News* (February 3, 2006), available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
4. The quotations and references in this paragraph were acquired from “Arab Press Review” and “In Quotes: Reaction to Cartoons,” *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>. *BBC News* offers a thorough collection of world opinions and press quotations surrounding the global donnybrook that occurred.
5. Philip Kennicott, “Clash over Cartoon is Caricature of Civilization,” *Washington Post* (February 4, 2006), available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/> (accessed February 7, 2006).
6. Karen Armstrong is a leading British commentator in the area of religious affairs and has written a number of books discussing Christian, Jewish, and Muslim relations and distinctives. Quote was taken from a commentary she gave to *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
7. Khaled Abou El Fadl, “The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality,” *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 2, no. 1 (2002/2003): 38.
8. *Ibid.*

9. Michael Walzer states that “peaceful coexistence . . . is always a good thing . . . The sign of its goodness is that individuals and regimes are so strongly inclined to say that they value it: they can’t justify themselves, to themselves or to one another, without endorsing the value of peaceful coexistence.” From a moral perspective, he argues, the “burden of argument falls on those who would reject” the ethical impetus to peacefully coexist. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 2.
10. Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 7–8.
11. Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 239.
12. Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Only Way*, trans. Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J., ed. Helen Rand Parish (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1992), 96.
13. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, trans. Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 5.19.23.
14. Qur’an, 2:256.
15. Khaled Abou El Fadl, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon, 2002), 18.
16. A. A. Rizvi, *The Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar’s Reign with special reference to Abu’l Fadl (1556–1605)* (New Delhi: M. Manoharlal, 1975), 364.
17. Abou El Fadl, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” 110.
18. Quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), 79.
19. N. C. Mehta, “An Unpublished Testament of Babur,” *The Twentieth Century* (January 1936): 340; quoted in Black, 240.
20. See Muhammad Amin, *Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad* (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, n.d.); quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, 70.
21. Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration c. 1100–c. 1500* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 36.
22. J. Budziszewski, *True Tolerance: Liberalism and the Necessity of Judgment* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2000), 9.
23. Quoted in Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), 78.
24. Vaclav Havel, Liberty Medal acceptance speech, July 4, 1994, available at <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal/Recipients/1994.asp>.
25. Nederman, 10.
26. John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration Before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 8.
27. Budziszewski, 9.
28. Abou El-Fad, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” 18. As well, chapter four discussed the Qur’an’s teaching on how a firmness of character is achieved when

one chooses endurance and forgiveness as the best response to being maligned by the nonmalevolent ignorance of the Other. Chapter four quotes several passages from the Qur'an, including: "The wronged one who endures with fortitude and forgiveness indeed achieves a matter of high resolve" (42:44); and "Take to forgiveness, enjoin good, and turn away from the ignorant" (7:199).

29. See, for instance, see Michael Sandel, "Judgmental Toleration," in *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality: Contemporary Essays*, ed. Robert George (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 107–12.
30. Budziszewski, 7.
31. Fethullah Güllen, "Tolerance in the Life of the Individual and Society," Speech recorded on January 13, 1996, available at <http://www.fgulen.com/> (accessed August 25, 2005).
32. Syed Abdul, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1965), 261, quoted in Ronald W. Neufeldt, "Islam and India: The Views of Muhammad Iqbal," *Muslim World* (July-October 1981): 191.
33. Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 122.
34. It is, of course, imperative to establish mutually accepted limitations for this cross-cultural understanding of tolerance. This symmetrical conception does not advocate an unfettered acceptance of the Other. Those who advocate violent intolerance toward others within and outside of a community only exacerbate the potential for conflict and threaten coexistence. Thus, this tempered, opinion-laden conception of tolerance must have transparent parameters that allow communities and civilizations to confront and even forestall those rogue and belligerent members of society who violently rebuff cross-cultural efforts toward achieving coexistence.
35. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Metaphysical Roots of Tolerance and Intolerance: An Islamic Interpretation," in *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance*, ed. Mehdi Amin Razavi and David Ambuel (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1997), 49–55.
36. *Ibid.*, 55.
37. John Christian Laursen, "Orientation: Clarifying the Conceptual Issues," in *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 6.
38. *Ibid.*, 56.
39. Matt Prodder, "Sebs Block Kosovo Bridge Opening," *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbcnews.com/>.
40. A. J. Conyers, *The Long Truce* (Dallas: Spence Publishing, 2001), 8.
41. Nasr, "An Islamic Interpretation," 55.
42. Martin E. Marty, *When Faiths Collide* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 6. This project disagrees, in part, with Marty's thesis that we must move beyond tolerance and "begin to effect change by risking hospitality toward the other." This project agrees that hospitality, among a host of important virtues, must be cultivated towards the Other. However, my thesis contends that important virtues, such as charity, liberty, justice, and hospitality, are vital goals best

affected by a transcultural strategy of tolerance. A community or individual is able to “welcome a stranger” or risk hospitality toward the Other only when they are first able to tolerate those beliefs and rituals of the Other that they believe are inferior or even offensive to their own. One is reminded of the Christian adage, “hate the sin, but love the sinner.”

43. Mohamed Talbi, “Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding between Islam and the West,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 25, no. 2 (1988), 189.

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